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LIFE IN A LOGGING CAMP.

By Arthur Hill.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAN BEARD.

"Now, you pick boughs while I get up the wood for the night." These words, which have just run off the phonograph of my memory, were spoken a quarter of a century ago, at nightfall in November, in the depths of the white pine forests of Michigan.

It was at the close of my first day's experience as a "Cruiser" or "Landlooker."

Coming, fresh from school, to a community where the successful business men were chiefly lumbermen, and noting that they seemed ready to risk all they had, and more, in the purchase of standing pine, I determined to secure for myself some cheap Government timber.

Having at school learned Land Surveying, which I practised during a summer vacation, I naturally decided to become a practical Landlooker. So I set out on this, my first trip, with an expert, from whom I might learn to estimate timber, as to quality and quantity, and at the same time select for entry some valuable Government land.

Our experience illustrates the methods and conditions of those days. First, we ordered from the Government and State Land Offices plats, showing the lands subject to entry in the Townships into which we were to go. Meanwhile we procured our camp outfit, which consisted of two sets of pack straps, an "A" tent of duck, two pairs of heavy woollen blankets, an axe, a frying-pan, two tin pails, to serve as kettles, and a tin plate, tin cup, a large and small spoon, and knife and fork for each man.

The day before our start we bought our supplies, being enough for a three weeks' trip. Our fare was simple but substantial: crackers, ham, beans, with a little pork for flavoring, tea, loaf-sugar, pepper and salt.

The "Swamper" Clearing Away the Brush.

Each man carried in his pack a two-

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bushel bag, partly filled with crackers, and partly with smaller bags which we made to contain the other articles of

The Landlooker.

food. At night these cracker-bags made good "heading" until the crackers ran low, when our boots went under the bags as bolsters, and with our coats on top, we still rested upon a downy bed of ease.

Our packs, when made up, weighed about sixty-five pounds each, and I here aver that no man can pick his way through swamp and thicket, bearing such a burden, and be entirely happy. Hardship, hunger — even pain — are more bearable than this work, which seems to belong to pack-mules, but in our northern forests must be done by men.

We made our way by stage and hired team to the lumber camp nearest the territory we were to explore, stayed there over night, and pushed forward the next day about nine miles—a good day's work—and had built a fire and put on the two kettles, one for the beans and the other for the tea, when I received the order to "pick boughs."

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The fire was built against a fine "back log," an immense prostrate pine, in decay, which was soon aglow with living coals and radiated warmth and light and cheer into our tent the whole night long. My comrade had felled three or four small hemlocks, say four inches through, and before supper, under his instructions, I made my first bed of hemlock "feathers." These are boughs, about two feet long, gathered from the tips of the limbs of the smaller hemlock, and are laid as feathers on a fowl, the stem sticking into the ground instead of into the flesh. And that night, as we turned in, with four inches of boughs and a blanket beneath us, a good tent overhead, and a genial fire at our feet over which simmered the savory beans, I felt more at home than ever before in my life; for was I not under my own roof-tree and in my own bed? And this had never been before.

The white pine supply of this country stands in the States of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota; the pine forests of Maine, Northern New York, and Pennsylvania having been long since substantially swept away. This timber reserve is fast diminishing, the out-put, for the last lumbering season, amounting to 9,000,000,000 feet, or nearly one-half the lumber cut of the entire country. To produce this requires an army of 135,000 men, or about fifteen men to each million feet. With the product of these States for a single year, a plank sidewalk three feet wide and two inches thick, resting on the ordinary stringers, could be built from the earth to the moon, 240,000 miles.

But before the timber can be lumbered, it is first estimated, and then purchased, sometimes from the Government and sometimes from private owners. The method of estimating is comparatively simple, but requires natural aptitude and experience. You first find a section corner as a starting-point, then divide the section into sixteen forty-acre tracts, and estimate each separately. But these lines of subdivision are imaginary, and measured by paces, and the courses are run by a simple pocket-compass; and should your bearings be incorrect, or your distances not true, you would locate the timber (which generally stands in ridges) on the wrong forty.

Again, your boundaries may be right, and yet your estimate of the quantity of timber wild. To estimate the quantity of timber on a forty-acre tract you travel it until you conclude you have seen the limits of the timber, and then set down the amount you think it will cut. You have not measured it, you

A Gang of Three.
(Chopper and sawyers.)

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have not even counted the trees, but an educated judgment tells you that it will cut, say, 500,000 feet, just as it tells an expert horse-dealer that a horse weighs, say, 1,100 pounds. But your judgment

A Shanty Boy with Cant-hook.

is often led astray; the timber may be more defective, shorter-bodied, or more tapering than it appears.

Again, your judgment follows your mental mood, the knots which seem sound in the sanguine to-day, show "punk" and rot in the gloom of to-morrow. The light and atmosphere play strange tricks. If you wish to sell a tract of pine timber, show it to your customer on an autumn afternoon, after the leaves have fallen from the deciduous trees; approach it from the west, with the sun hanging low in the sky, shooting its rays under the tops and upon the tall trunks of the lofty trees; then, as to size and beauty, they are glorified—they loom—and when the buyer comes back on some gray day to view his timber, he will wonder why it seems so strangely shrunken.

The typical cruiser of the northwestern pineries is the natural successor of those *courriers des bois*, or rangers of the woods, whom Irving so graphically describes in his "Astoria." The rangers of those days roamed the same woods in search of furs and peltries that the landlooker traverses to-day looking for valuable timber. Each calling requires hardihood, skill in woodcraft, and a commercial instinct upon which to test values. There is the same willingness to forego for long periods the pleasures of social life, with the same inclination to boisterous excess when back amid friends again.

The discomforts of the landlooker's life try the soul as well as the body. In summer comes the plague of sand-flies, mosquitoes, and gnats, and sweltering heat and tainted food; in winter, the numbing cold, the camp lost, and the night passed in storm and darkness pacing to and fro, lest sleep and more than sleep may come. The snow melts in the neck, and cold drops go trickling down the backbone; and then there is the plunge through the treacherous ice into the frozen stream. Feet become crippled, frozen, and every step a pang. When the snow is wet and the snow-shoes load up badly, the strings which bind them to the feet are thongs of torture. During one of these trying trips, vows are made, sealed with shivering oaths which shake the tops of the loftiest trees, that never, never again, will the swearer be such a fool, etc., etc.; but, like the shipwrecked sailor, necessity and habit soon send him back to new hardships and fresh trials.

As to personal danger, there is little

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in woods-ranging, and that results mainly from isolation. From wild animals it may be said that there is absolutely none. Yet the cry of the lynx and the wild-cat sometimes startles you, and the howl of the wolf suggests the hair-lifting stories of boyhood days. As to bears, they are as much afraid of you as you of them, and if you do not run, they will.

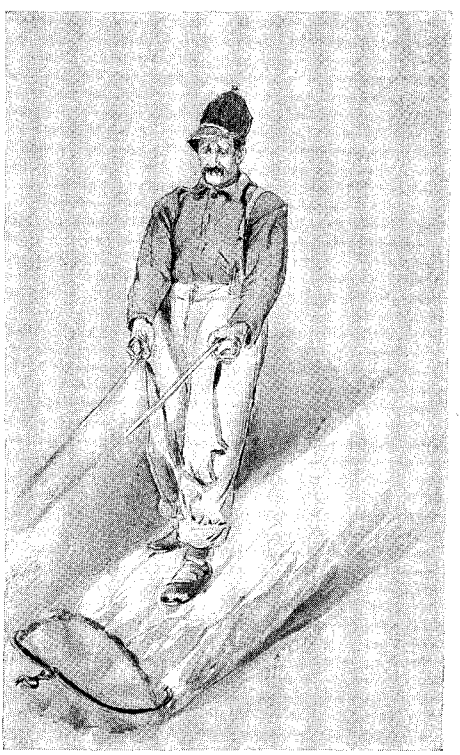
But there is the broken leg, and the gashed foot, and the burning fever, those natural accidents and incidents of forest life, where not only the doctor is needed, but "grub" runs short. Then it is that the moral and physical strength of the cruiser is put to heroic tests. He drags himself for miles on hands and knees, and on rudely constructed rafts floats down unsafe rivers. Sometimes the maimed or stricken one is carried by his partner, a modern Anchises, to some distant lumber camp or cabin. But such is the skill and resolution and endurance of these hardy men, that I have known but one to perish in the wilderness. Camping alone, and getting up his wood for the night, he felled a tree something over a foot through. The trunk swung sideways off the stump, knocked him down and fell across his legs, breaking both of them, and binding him to the ground. And thus, weeks afterward, his body was found. It was characteristic that he had in some way managed to get his coat off, and place it in a roll under his head, and thus grimly he awaited starvation—death.

The days of "looking" Government timber are wellnigh over. The landlooker is now engaged in estimating what is called "second-hand land," the land of private owners. The trips are shorter, the packs lighter, and food more varied than in the old days. In winter he sometimes carries a small folding-stove, weighing, say, twelve pounds. This not only serves in cooking, but keeps his tent warm, and thus saves the labor of getting up the half-cord of wood at night.

But with less hardship has come greater responsibility. The high values upon which pine timber changes ownership require the best skill and judgment in determining the amount and quality. Single transactions amounting to five hundred thousand dollars are not unusual, and they sometimes amount to double that sum, and the purchaser and seller will in each case rely on his landlooker in placing a value upon the property; and rarely are they disappointed either in the judgment or integrity of these rough men.

On the side of what is called book-learning, they are not educated. It has been a life habit with them to inspect and observe rather than read the observations of others. If a landlooker's report is well written and clerky, beware! He is not true to the craft. He is a Jules Verne, not a Kit Carson.

Few landlookers come to riches. Inclined, like most men who live lives of



Snaking a Log with Skidding-tongs.

hardship and adventure, to improvidence, they make for themselves, at the best, reputations and a modest competence, but for their employers, fortunes. Original, inquisitive, active in mind and body, these bold skirmishers be een

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the lines of savagery and civilization must soon vanish with the forests where their tents are pitched, and the next generation will only know by tale and legend of the life and labors of these hearty, hardy woods-rangers.

The Dinner-horn.

The timber estimated and bought, it must then be lumbered and taken to market. To do this, "tote" or supply roads must be cut, streams cleared of obstructions, banking-grounds prepared, and log-roads made, all preliminary to the work of cutting and hauling logs. The average camp contains, say, sixty men. Familiarly we speak of them as "boys," because they carry in their bosoms the free, responsive heart of youth. There is a foreman in charge who directs the work, hires and discharges men, and sets wages, except as to men engaged at fixed wages at the office of the employers.

In gathering a crew for the woods you come face to face with some of the faults and follies of the "shanty boy." The foreman scours the town for men, visiting the boarding-houses, small hotels, and saloons, where they congregate. He chaffs them, treats them, tells them what wages will be paid to good men, and, if possible, flatters each into the impression that he will be able to earn the top wages. Word is now out that the Company is hiring a crew, and men straggle into the office and are hired.

A day and hour is set for the start. The time comes. If you have engaged sixty men you are fortunate if there are thirty on hand, and the rest, where are they? Still in the saloons, boarding-houses, and hotels, for not until money is gone, and credit too, will many of these improvident, good-natured fellows leave their haunts to breast the toils and trials of shanty life. And they often go mortgaged to the hotel-keeper for a sum equal to two months' wages, already spent, the least of it for board and lodging.

Many of the proprietors of these places where the men stay are honorable and kind-hearted, but there are those among them who lay in wait for the boys when they come down from the woods, drug them with vile and poisonous potions, poured from bottles labelled "whiskey," and in a single night transfer to their pockets forty or fifty dollars of the hard-earned money of some sociable fellow, who, with his winter's pay in his pocket, started out to take only a friendly drink.

A case which shows how fast and foolishly money can be spent came not long since under my eye. A man who had put in a long winter and a spring drive, presented himself at the Company's office at about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, with his "time," as his order

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DRAWN FROM LIFE BY DAN BEARD.

Dinner-hour in a Michigan Lumber Camp.

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from the foreman is called, which read as follows, except as to names :

STILES & CO.'S CAMP,
May 30, 1892.

John Doe has worked in the woods one hundred and fifty-eight days (158), at twenty-six dollars ($26.00) per month, and on the drive twenty-seven and one-half (27½) days, at two dollars ($2.00) per day.

Camp account sixty-four dollars and fifty cents ($64.50).

RICHARD ROE, *Foreman.*

This left due him $148.50. He told the Company he had been "blowing in" his wages for the last two years, but that now he was going to "change his gait," and save up enough money to buy a piece of land, so he would have a place to go to when he got old and "played out." But he wanted a little money to get some clothes and spend with the boys, so he would draw the $48.50, and leave the $100 with the Company.

It was suggested that he take his money and put it in the First National Bank on a time certificate of deposit, where at the end of six months he would receive interest. It was thought that under this plan he would be more apt to keep the same intact, and it was so deposited. The man went off with his $48.50 and his certificate, happy in his possession of present cash and a prospective home.

About nine o'clock next morning a small tradesman came into the office, to ask if anyone would go down with him to the bank to identify the signature of John Doe, which he exhibited on the back of the one hundred dollar certificate. It was found on inquiry that Doe had gone to this man's place of business about seven o'clock the evening previous, "a little full," and wanted him to cash his certificate. The man hesitated and told Doe to wait till morning, when he could get his money at the bank; but Doe could not wait, and finally, as a favor (so the man expressed it), he gave Doe $90 for the certificate, or what represented ten days' hard work was paid as discount on $100 for fourteen hours. When Doe made this transaction he had struck his regular gait, and it was a fast one, and in two days he was broke. And the farm? It's the "Poor Farm" and the County House, for many such as he.

Loading Logs from the Skidway

But it is not for drink alone this misspent money goes. With the coming of spring, strange women whisk along the sidewalks of the lumbering towns with "war-paint" on, ogling these giants of the woods, who, fresh from dingy winter camp and driving tent, are quick to lay their heads in the laps of these coarse carmined Delilahs, to be shorn.

The typical shantyman works only fit-

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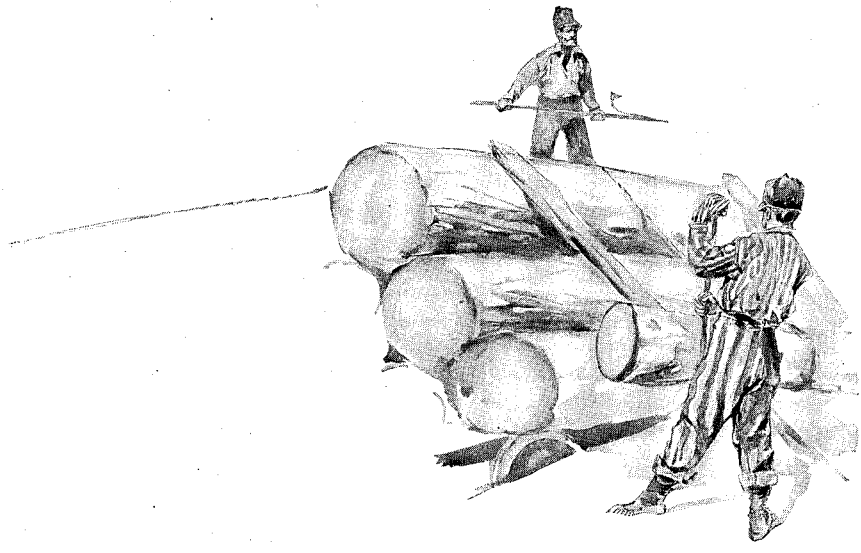
fully in summer on the river or in the saw-mill, going back to the woods in the early fall. But there is a considerable portion of the camp crew, who have steady summer jobs in the mills or on farms, who go to the woods late and come out early. Many of these have families, for whom they faithfully toil and save. Others are steady, thrifty young men who have bought, and out of their earnings are paying for, a piece of land, or perhaps are supporting a good old mother, or paying off the mortgage on the home farm.



upon Lumber-car by Horse-power.

By starting camp early you secure the genuine shantyman, skilful, strong, nervous, well disposed, but inclined to all the small vices which, from the ardor of his nature, become in him large ones; and so he too often comes trembling and broken and bankrupt to take his place in the ranks for a fresh campaign.

And it is upon such as he that you rely for the work which more prudent men will not do. You are clearing a stream of obstructions, so that the logs may run down it in the spring. Before it is finished the snow comes, ice forms, yet the sunken tree in the stream bottom must be cut, strong arms must loosen it from its bed, the chain put around it, and the unwilling horses forced into the freezing waters to haul it ashore. And all the day long, for days which run into weeks, these hardy fellows must grapple and lift and carry the débris from the stream, wading the icy waters to the waist, and wet to the neck, inviting every disease which comes from such exposure. Yet at night, after supper, around the crackling fire, in the cloud of smoke, and steam from drying garments, with pipes alight, what honest cheer! And in the morning, though "a little stiff," how pluckily is the ice again broken for the diurnal baptism!

While the river crew is tenting out and clearing the stream, the winter camps are built, generally in the midst of the timber, and the work preparatory to log-hauling goes forward. The camps are made of round logs, and roofed and floored generally with rough boards. There is a men's camp, where the men lounge and sleep; a cook camp, which is a large dining-room and kitchen combined, and a large barn, which is called—I know not why—"the hovel," where the hay is stored, sometimes in the loft and sometimes in an extension at the rear end, the first arrangement being the

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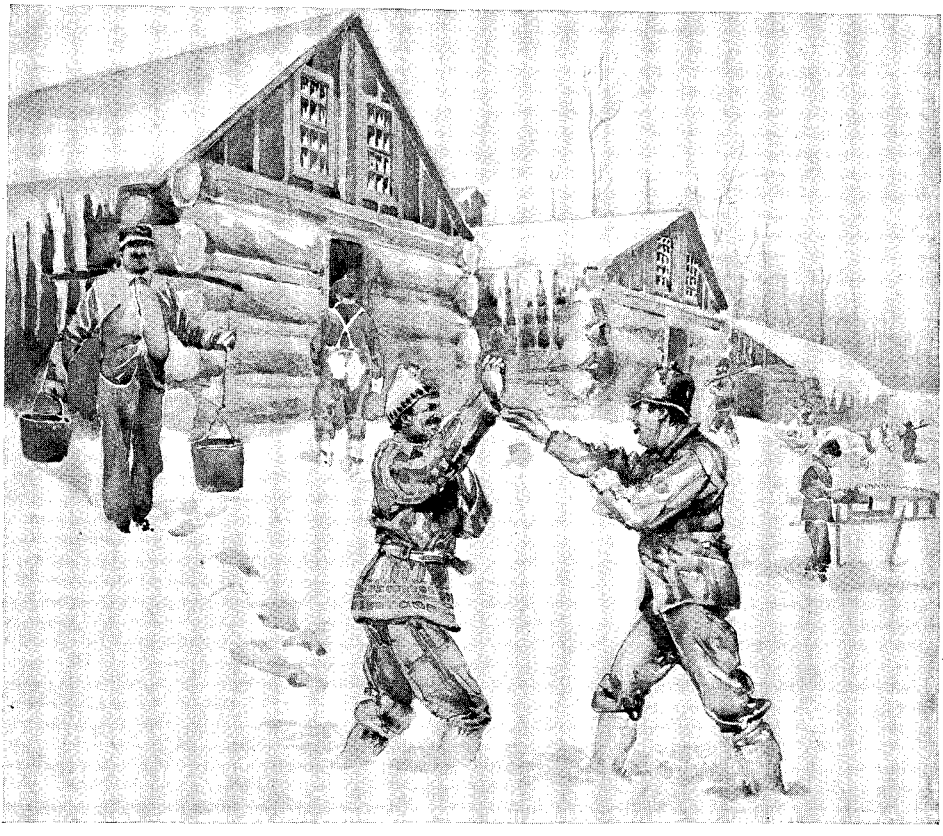

A Typical Michigan Loggers' Camp.

Cook camp. Men's camp. Barn or "hovel."

warmer, but more unsafe, because of fires set by the teamsters' lanterns. The two living camps and the barn—and there are sometimes two and even three—the granary, blacksmith's shop, and office where the foreman and the scaler sleep, with an extra bed for the proprietor when he comes up, make quite a backwoods village. For an average camp of, say, sixty men, the men's camp and the cook camp are each about 60 feet by 20 feet. The men sleep in rough wooden bunks ranged in double tiers along the sides of the camp. Formerly they lay on boughs, or at best hay, with a single blanket spread over it, but in these luxurious days they have thin bed-ticks stuffed with hay or straw. They have not yet attained to pillows and sheets. With a fire in the big stove, which has generally replaced the more cheerful fireplace, and with a heavy double blanket over you and a warm partner, with whom you can "spoon," you rarely sleep cold.

Along each side of the camp is a seat made of a thick hewn slab, for which the bunk-frames furnish a back, and this stiff, straight-backed, substantial, immovable structure is called the "Deacon Seat." When evening comes, ranged along these seats, and lounging, if over-weary, in the bunks, the crew becomes, in fact, a social club. Then jokes and sometimes gibes go round, and tales, often curiously like those of Canterbury. Cards are sometimes played, though in most camps prohibited. And if there is a fiddler in the camp there is sure to be a jig-dancer, and there is the boisterous "Stag Quadrille" and the spirited "French Four."

But surer than all these is a song—the shanty song—whether comic, heroic,

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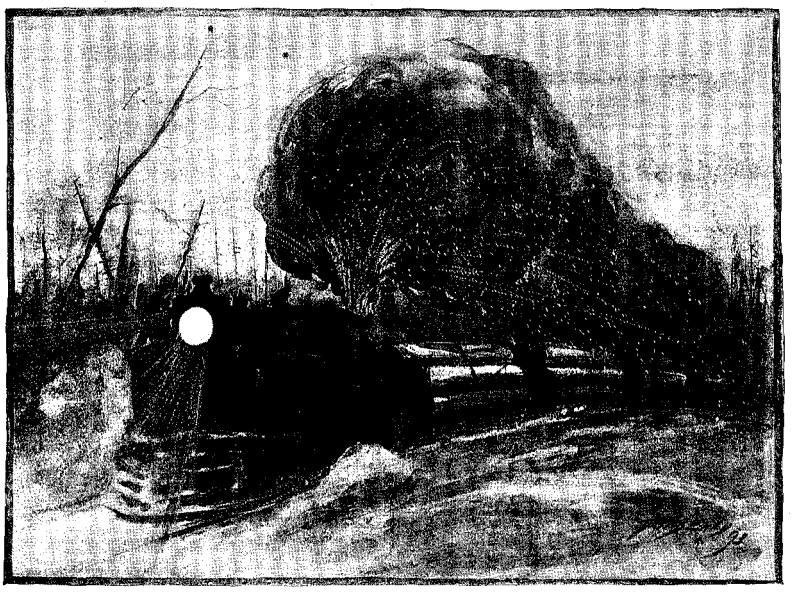
or sentimental—to win the crew's attention and applause. As with all uncultivated men, they exhibit in taste and feeling natural and wholesome tendencies. Like boys, they are not schooled to restraint of feelings nor jaded with sensational fads. It is from the gallery always that virtue triumphant is heartily cheered, be it ever so awkward, and from box and parquette that vice, if artistic and "natural," gets kid-glove applause. And so with these shanty songs, the rules of music and of metre are as nothing to the sentiment they carry, and the voice of the singer to please must come not from an educated thorax, but from the heart. Honest love, and words which tell of toil and trials and adventure, make the chief burden of their verses. Here is a characteristic song,



A Log Train Hauling Logs to Banking-ground.
(In large camps railroads are supplanting sleighs.)

evidently home-made, that fits the average taste and temper of a shanty crew:

"THE SHANTY BOY.

"As I walked out one evening, just as the sun went down,
I carelessly did ramble till I came to Saginaw Town.
I heard two girls conversing, as slowly I passed them by;
One said she loved a farmer's son, and the other a Shanty Boy.

"'The one that loved the farmer's son, these words I heard her say,
'The reason why I love him is at home with me he'll stay;
He'll stay at home all winter, to the woods he will not go,
And when the springtime comes again, his lands he'll plow and sow.'

. . . . . .

"'I shall always praise my Shanty Boy who goes to the woods in fall,
He is both stout and hearty and fit to stand a squall;
With pleasure I will greet him in the spring when he comes down,
His money on me he'll spend it free when your mossback he has none.'

"'How can you praise your Shanty Boy who to the woods does go?
He's ordered out before daylight to face the frost and snow,
While happy and contented my farmer's son will lie,
Soft tales of love he'll tell to me while the storms are blowing by.'

"'I never can stand that soft talk,' the other girl did say,
'The most of them they are so green the cows could eat them for hay;
How easy it is to know them when they come into town,
The small boy shouting after them, "Mossback, how come you down?'

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A "Mossback" Hauling Hay on the Tote Road.

"'What I've said unkind of your Shanty Boy,
I do not mean it so,
And if ever I meet with one of them along
with him I'll go,
And leave my mossback farmer's son to
plough and plant his farm,
While my Shanty Boy so bold and free will
save me from all harm.'"

But "lights out" comes all too soon at night to suit the boys, and "turn out" too early in the morning, when they creep from bunk to breakfast-table, and after a short pull at their pipes while awaiting daylight, with its first glimmer gather their tools and set out for the work of the day.

In the fall there are road-makers who, along the lines carefully run and blazed by the foreman, fell the timber, cutting it at the roots so that no stumps remain, log out the road to its proper width, and then with plow and scraper and mattox and shovel make it nearly as level and quite as solid as a railroad grade. The roadbed is sunk instead of raised, so that the sleighs will not "slew." It is plowed out after each snow-storm with great snow-plows, and sprinklers are run during freezing weather, making a solid bed of ice, over which enormous loads can be hauled. The log-sleighs have ten, twelve, and even fourteen-foot bunks, or cross beams, on which the load rests, and in Minnesota, in the winter of '91–'92 a single load, scaling 31,400 feet, was hauled on a single pair of log-sleighs by two span of horses. During the present winter in Michigan, a load more than equal to the above was hauled by a single team, and will be placed on the grounds of the Columbian Exposition as one of the wonders of the world. It will be 18 feet long, 15 feet wide, and 33 feet 3 inches from the top to the roadbed, weighing over 100 tons. There is great strife between the teamsters in making log-hauling records. Generally they groom their horses well and are inclined to over-feed them, to be sure they have enough. They feed hay, oats, and mixed corn and oats ground, called "ground-feed," which is heating; and if there be imprudence in feeding, there will be heard a great racket in the stable, and teamsters and the foreman must spend perhaps the entire night drenching and otherwise doctoring a sick horse.

During the hauling season proper the teamsters must get out an hour or more before daylight, taking an early "teamsters' breakfast," so as to be sure to get in their trips; for logs cut must be hauled, just as grain cut must be harvested.

While the log-roads are being made the log-cutters are felling timber and cutting it into logs. The trees are sawed down, the saw being more rapid and economical than the axe. By driving a wedge into the saw cut, you can throw your tree, unless very strongly leaning, wherever you wish it. When down the tree is first "laid off" to the best advantage into standard lengths and then sawed into logs, which are now ready to

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go to the skidway. The skidway consists of two logs or timbers about ten feet apart, laid perpendicular to the log-road and well blocked up, upon which a tier of logs is placed ready to be loaded on the sleighs to go to the banking-ground or "landing."

To get a log to the skidway, first a "swamper" clears away the brush and débris, then the skidding-team is brought in and the log is either hauled away on a rude dray consisting of two wide runners with a nose-piece and a

The Kitchen.

Head cook. Chore-boy. Cook's "devils."

single beam; or, in the case of small logs, it is grappled with "skidding-tongs," which seize the log like a pair of pinchers and the team snakes it to the skidway.

Formerly skidding was done generally with cattle, as the hauling progressed, but now horses are used, and, if the winter is late in setting in, nearly the entire cut is skidded before the horses are put to hauling logs on sleighs. Quite frequently there are open winters, when there are sunshine and showers instead of frost and snow, and then it is that the foreman's hair grows gray. There are, say, $30,000 worth of logs on skids. If left there over the season fire is liable to sweep through and destroy them. At best, the sap will discolor and become unmerchantable, and grubs will bore the logs unless one goes to the expense of peeling them. The use of the money tied up is also involved, so that every device is used to get the logs to the

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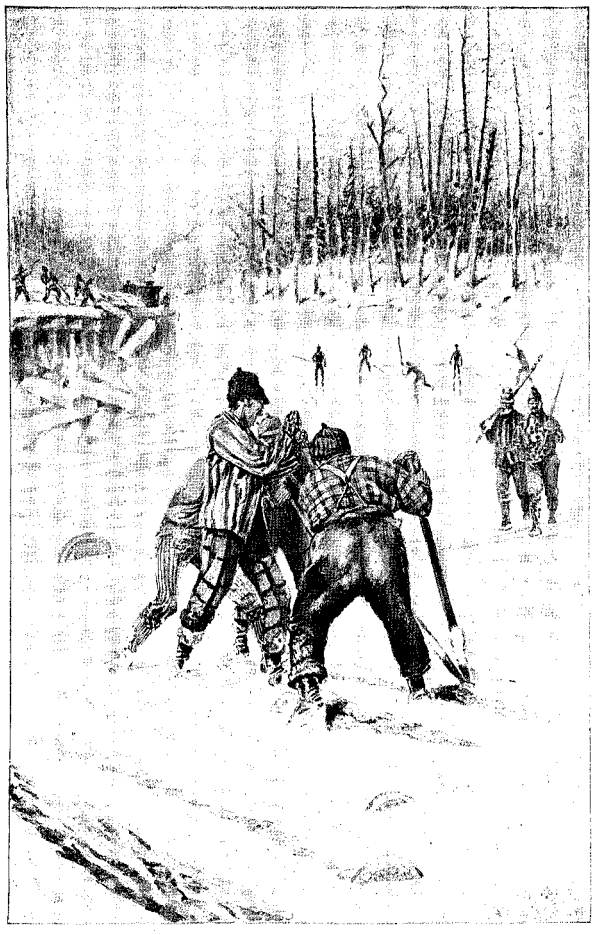
stream. When there is a bank of snow under some shaded hill in the vicinity, or a frozen lake, snow or ice are hauled



The Pond above the Sluice.

(Prying logs loose from the ice with pevies.—In distance, breaking the ice.)

often a mile to spread upon the road along the sleigh-track. In freezing weather the sprinkler is run, and without a flake of snow in sight one sees, as by a miracle, immense sleigh-loads of logs passing down the road. When the days are soft and sunny the hauling is done by night, and perhaps after all this turmoil and trouble and expense and the logs are all banked, there will come a great fall of snow, which will lay for weeks, as if to mock your energy.

But there are winters when there is no natural log-hauling, during one of which I heard this dialogue!

"Say, Billy, did you ever see such a winter as this?"

"Yes, I did."

"For heaven's sake, when?"

"A year ago last summer."

After one of these winters, when logs are left on skids, there are various summer operations to get them out. "Pole-roads" are built, where cars with wheels with concave faces run on poles instead of rails. Wooden trams and iron trams are built, great trucks are used, but in all this there is no profit. It is entered into only to save from absolute loss. The recurrence of these open or snowless winters, and the increasing distance of the uncut timber from the streams, has led to the building of many logging railroads through the pineries leading to the streams, or to main lines of railroad over which the logs are taken directly to the saw-mills.

The skidway men, who are to be the "loaders," receive the logs brought to them by the skidding-team, and with their cant-hooks roll them into lofty tiers. In rolling up they use spiked skids so the logs will not slip back on them, and at a certain height a team or a large horse with a line, is used to give a log the lift. When it comes to loading these logs on the sleighs, then judgment, and strength, and skill are all equally required with the loaders, the object being to get on as large a load as the team can haul. It must be balanced carefully, as the long bunks overhang the runners. When the road is good, the only limit to the load is the capacity of the sleighs, and to pile up a load of logs higher than a load of hay requires a careful selection and arrange-

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SKETCHED FROM LIFE BY DAN BEARD. ENGRAVED BY E. H. DEL'ORME.

Sunday in Camp.

(Bunks and "Deacon Seats" along the sides.)

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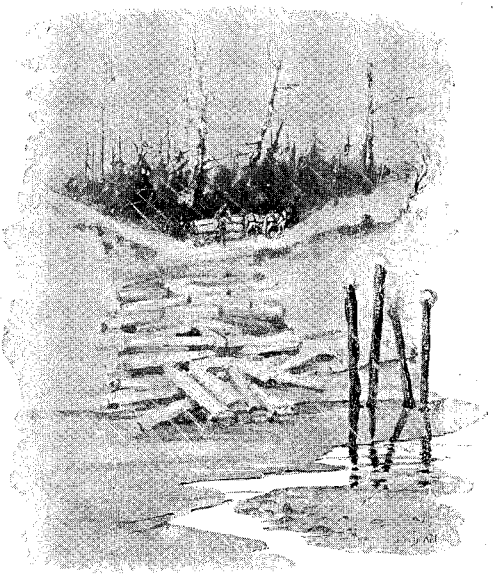
ment of logs, the larger ones in the lower tiers, topping off with the smaller ones. There must be the most skilful handling, lest the load "squash out" or logs rolled up go over the load. Again, logs apparently in place often start back down the steep slanting skids, and unless promptly caught and firmly held by the cant-hooks, there are bruised or broken limbs. There is no place in the camp where mind and muscle must act so promptly as at the skidway, excepting only the banking-grounds in spring.



A High Banking-ground.

As a load goes to the landing it passes a number of men employed in keeping up the log-road with shovels and scrapers, covering the bare places with snow, bridging it where soft and springy, and putting in sloping skids where the sleighs are inclined to sheer. This is comparatively light work, but requires men of good judgment and faithfulness, as they are very little under the foreman's eye, and work is not pushed on to them.

When the load arrives at the landing, the chains which bind it are loosened and thrown off, the logs rolled off the sleighs, measured by the quick-witted scaler, and placed by the banking-ground men in tiers, projecting into the stream or lake upon which they are to float to market. This is active work and requires strength, skill with the cant-hook, and care in so placing the logs that they will "break" or roll in easily when the ice goes out.

And thus the work goes on, the winter through, under the charge of the foreman, a man of energy, capacity, and experience, who has risen from the ranks of common workmen, and now receives, and fairly earns, from three to four times his former pay. He must be up early to set the men at work. Wherever during the day there is a lag or a lack, there he must be, urging, directing, and, with brawny shoulders, helping. After supper at night he must get from the log-cutters their count for the day, from the driver of each team the number of logs skidded, and in the hauling season the number of logs hauled by each team to the banking-ground. If any one's count is short, he wants to know the reason why. And here enters tact, which is based on knowledge of men and the motives which move them. To the log-cutter who is behind the rest it is: "Tom, can't you get as many logs as Mike in the same sized timber? Why, I thought you were the best man of the two. There must be something wrong with your saw." To the driver of the skidding team, whose work is not up to average: "Jack, if you don't show up better than this to-morrow night I will have to send you to town on the "white horse." This "white horse" is the time order already described. Then there are visits to the stable, to see that the horses are properly cared for; and the blacksmith's shop, where broken sleighs and tools are being repaired. There is the dealing out of tobacco and clothing to the men from the camp supply-chest, called the "Van," the ordering of supplies, and the keeping of the camp books—simple, but to the man who is skilled with the cant-

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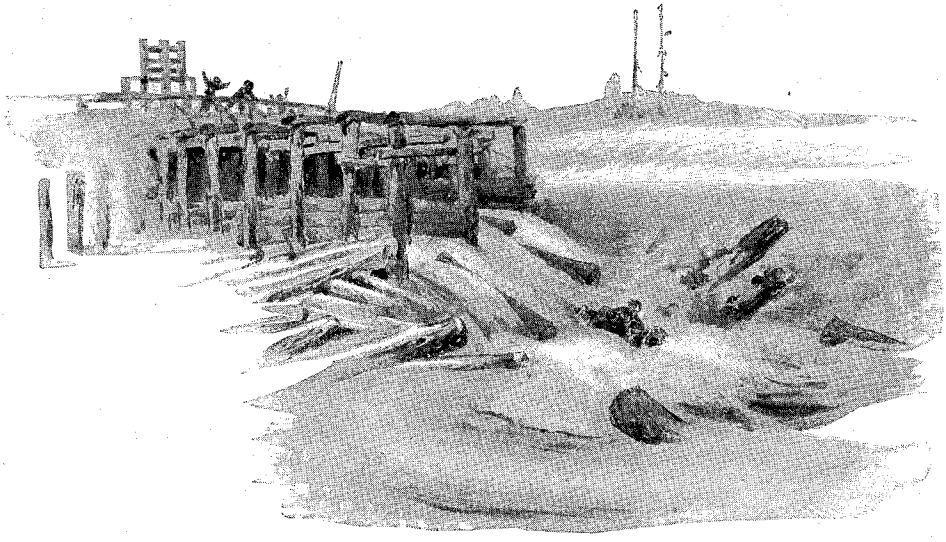
hook and not with the pen, a task most serious. It can be safely written that in the log-hauling season a good active foreman works eighteen hours a day, deducting say, an hour for eating.

It is from these plucky shanty boys that most of the great lumbermen of the country have been developed. First they worked as common hands; then they were chosen to run a camp. Out of savings they bought a few teams and went to jobbing, putting in timber on contract for others, then they bought and lumbered timber on their own account, and finally with a large capacity came large enterprises, great lumber-mills, logging railroads, and finally great fortunes.

But, as in the other walks of life, there are few even of these who get the first promotion who rise to this upper level. In the industrial army, as in the army militant, there are corporals who earn their stripes and yet, from lack of force and pluck never earn the stars of a general, or even the bars of a captain.

In addition to riches some of the fortunate ones have risen by force of character and the favor of their countrymen to high political stations. The veteran lumberman and politician, Hon. Philetus Sawyer, is a conspicuous example. A young "bull-puncher" in a Wisconsin logging camp became in middle life Congressman, then United States Senator, and his "haw" and "gee" were as good and guiding in Washington as in Wisconsin.

The martyr of the camp is the cook. He sleeps even less than the foreman. And if the bread is heavy, or the potatoes short, or supper a little late, though he may not be in fault, it is always in order to swear at the cook. With the teamsters' breakfast at 4 A.M. and stragglers coming in at 7 P.M. for supper, it is a most trying berth. For a crew of sixty men, the cook has a helper, called in camp parlance the "cookee," and a "chore-boy" to fetch wood and water and help wait on table. At meals the crew seat themselves at two long tables, furnished with tin dishes. Strong tea is drunk from basins, which must be continually refilled. At dinner there is generally a hearty bean or vegetable soup, and generally fresh beef. For every meal there are pork and beans, corned beef, either warm or cold, and there are potatoes and turnips, and cabbage and sauerkraut, in all well-furnished camps, in profuse abundance. As to sweets there are plenty, though generally not elaborate. There



An Accident at the Sluice.

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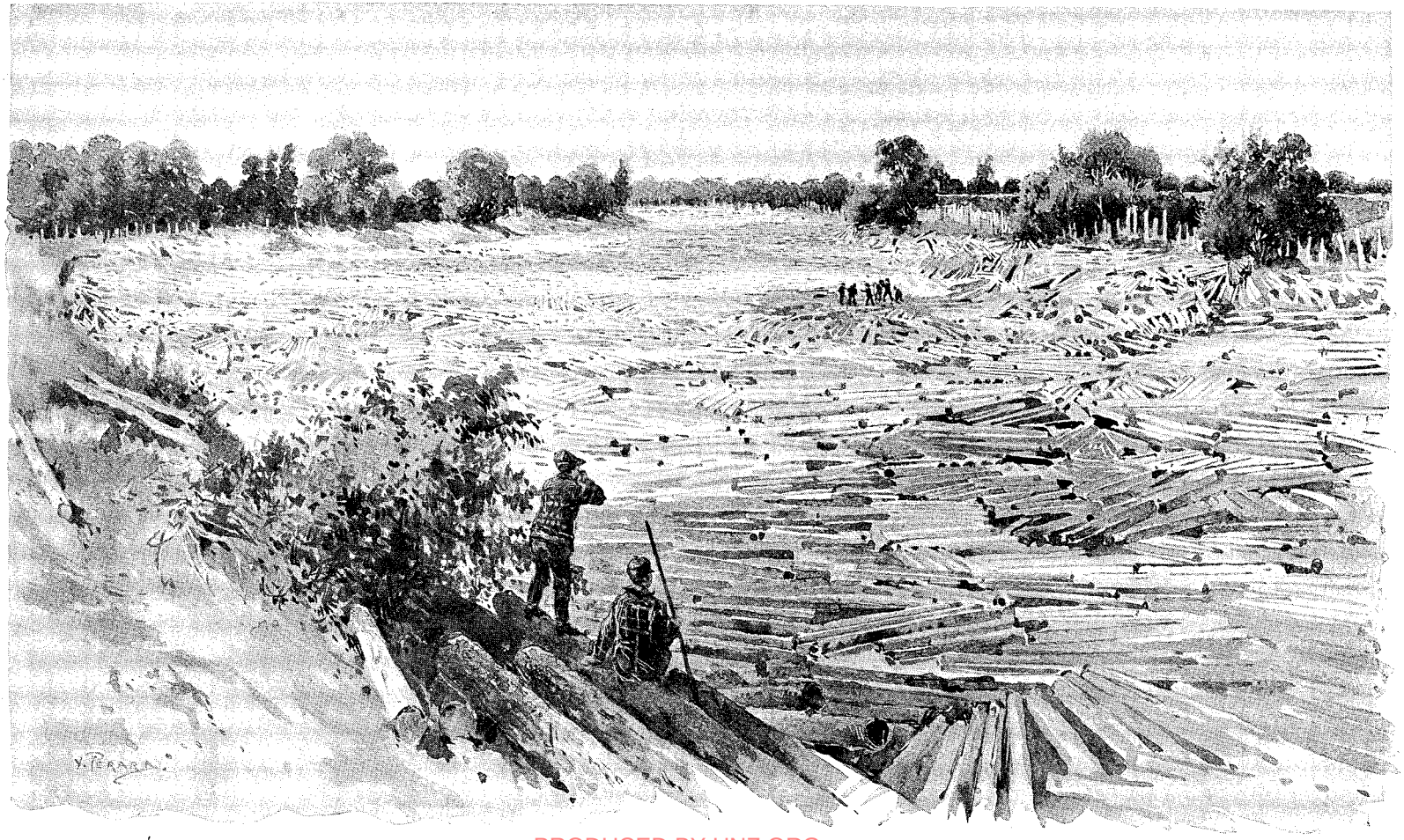

DRAWN BY V. PERARD FROM SKETCHES BY DAN BEARD AND PHOTOGRAPHS.

A Log Jam—In the Spring.

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is sugar for the tea, and molasses, and gingerbread, and cookies, and dried-apple pie, and mince pie, made from mince-meat bought by the half ton, and bread pudding, served with a sauce most palatable. And since the days of "oleo" there is butter three times a day, a luxury before comparatively unknown.

Nowhere in the world is there a bill of fare more relishable, abundant, and wholesome, for outdoor workers, than is found on the table of a first-class lumber camp. With sixty men a barrel of flour must be converted into bread and biscuit in about two days. Meat is measured out by the hundred, and not by the pound. Hash is chopped with a machine, and soup cooked in great water-boilers. It is no wonder that with this hearty fare and no dissipations a shanty boy grows strong and clear-eyed, and with the sharp daily exercise his muscles swell and harden until his strength is as a giant's.

To return to the shanty cook. Short of needed rest, he becomes sometimes a little irritable. If he could have the clarifying influence of one hour's exercise in the fresh air each day and proper rest at night this would not be, but as it is he is the one man in camp who suffers from overwork. In spite of all this he generally bears a cheerful front, and at midday will often blow comic strains on the great dinner-horn, which make the hungry workers laugh as they drop their tools, and the horses lift their heads and sometimes answer with a whinny.

In the hauling season the blacksmith is another long-houred man. There are horses to be shod and broken cant-hooks and chains to be mended, and there are days when crush, crush, go parts of the great log sleighs. His is not then the case of Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith:"

> "Each morning sees some task begun,
> Each evening sees it close;
> Something attempted, something done,
> Has earned a night's repose."

With the camp blacksmith, something smashed has spoiled a night's repose, for it often takes him well toward morning to put the sleighs in repair. A man called a "tinker," who works in wood alone, is sometimes employed to help the blacksmith, but more generally a blacksmith works in both wood and iron, and with his helper makes all the repairs. The wages of cook and blacksmith are a little more than double those of common hands, and are well earned; and indeed this may well be said of the entire crew generally, down to the chore-boy. Of course there are individual cases where men do not earn their wages, where their thoughts during the day are not of the work before them, but, to use a camp phrase, "of fat pork and sundown."

Nowhere should it be easier to save up wages than in a lumber camp. Food and lodging are furnished, so there remains only to be bought clothing and the one luxury of tobacco for pipe and quid. But the shanty boy is by nature sympathetic and free-hearted. A falling limb mashes some poor fellow's shoulder. The ready cant-hook fails to catch and stop the rolling log, and there is a crunched leg, or perhaps a maimed and lifeless body.

Then you see how pitch-stained hands can be gentle, and rough hearts generous. To send the injured comrade to the hospital and provide him care, or to coffin and send to his saddened home the one whose life so suddenly ended, the boys raise a fund, each and all giving freely. And to their honor let it be here said that in those primal traits of manhood—courage, generosity, and honesty—these men are equal to any. The one great fault of these bluff working-men is that they spend their own money in ways not wise. But are there not "gentlemen" who spend, instead of their own money, that of other people, in ways not more wise?

During the winter there are camp lotteries where watches and guns are raffled off, in which most of the crew take chances. And another way of getting rid of money is to patronize a jeweler who comes into camp on Saturday and spends Sunday. He brings watches and jewelry and breezy stories and new songs and a banjo. He picks the banjo. He mends a watch, for

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which he would charge in the city a dollar, and charges nothing. The boys are all his "chums" and in this atmosphere of good cheer he sells sometimes five hundred dollars' worth of watches in a single day, and then departs regretted.

The Sabbath is dedicated to cleanliness rather than to godliness. The day when the shanty boy only put on a clean shirt when he bought a new one, and then put it on the outside, and so on till spring, when he gradually "peeled," has now gone by, and the foreman requires the crew to keep clean. So on Sunday they do their washing, they shave themselves and one another, and there is more or less artistic hair-cutting. They darn and mend and write letters and read and visit neighboring camps and eat enormous dinners, the cook's pride and best effort, and so the day soon glides into evening and the bunks are sought early to gather strength for the hard week's work ahead. Many of the men delight in the most fantastic colors in their flannel shirts and blouses and trousers and German socks, in which appear the most vivid greens and blues and reds and yellows, in plaids and stripes, a taste barbaric or bizarre. These fashions change but still remain extreme. But a few years since every river driver wore a long, red sash, and they were known as the Red Sash Brigade; and when they entered one of the small river towns and, because of some small provocation, decided to "clean it out," they were more terrible than the Old Guard of Napoleon.

And so the winter passes, till lengthened days and softened air and beaming sun make the log road run with water, and at last comes a rain with a warm wind from the south. The bottom is out of the road. The break-up has come.

The teams are now sent out to be summered either in the pasture or at work about a saw-mill. Between log hauling and driving there is generally an interval during which the ice in the streams is melting. A portion of the men now go out to enter upon their summer's jobs. Others to keep the terms of the promise with which they warmed themselves during the chill winter days, to paint the town a "double-dyed red" when the logs were in.

With the melting of the snow and ice comes the breaking-in and driving of the logs. The banking-ground swarms with men armed with pevies (which are cant-hooks furnished with strong pikes in the end), who attack the great tiers of logs as they lay piled in the landing. Teams hitched to lines, at the end of which is a hook similar to a cant-hook are used to loosen the "key log." This hook is driven firmly into a log at the foot of the rollway, and as it is pulled out the whole face of the rollway, topples forward into the stream. This must be repeated again and again. At times so firmly is the log bound that two spans of horses attached to the line paying through a double sheave-block are unable to start it and then the pevies must assist. The trained horses firmly set their feet and settle into their collars. The pevies pitch and pry and nip the log a fraction of an inch — and suddenly, and sometimes quite too soon, down thunders the towering mass of logs. The men jump to the side, they clamber and keep atop of the plunging logs, they jump for safety into the surging stream, coming out generally unhurt, undaunted.

Nowhere, unless it be on the battle-field, is there more reckless daring shown than by men in breaking rollways. They must be continually cautioned and called back, for their zeal and courage and pride all combine to urge them into the most perilous places. When the worst comes to one of them, as it sometimes does, the men are sobered, and there is for a half-day, perhaps, caution — proper caution only. But soon the habit of doing and daring reasserts itself, and danger is again courted instead of shunned.

The landings broken in, the drive is then ready to start for the boom, where the logs are to be sorted according to ownership, and then delivered to the mill, to be made into lumber. As the logs were put afloat they were strung out along the stream as much as possible by the "jam crew," whose duty it is to keep the main body of logs in

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motion, breaking jams where the logs block up the river by wedging in sharp bends, or lodging on sunken tree-tops, or grounding on sand-bars. Behind them follows the "rear crew," the name indicating the work they do. Whether the drive is being moved on floods from dams, or on natural water, there are great fluctuations in depth of water; and, as a consequence, as the rear passes along, large numbers of logs which have been thrown out beyond the limit of the present flow of water, lodging on the bank, on the flats, and in false channels, must be got into the moving drive. Occasionally teams are used to aid in this work, but more often it is done entirely by the men. It is a splendid sight to see eight of them divide into fours, and seize on each side with their cant-hooks with a lifting hold a log scaling eight hundred feet, and weighing say, five thousand pounds, and move it on end, slowly but surely into the stream, singing, "Heave O," with their deep voices.

The large butt-logs drag in low stages of water, and they soon accumulate at the rear, and must all be rolled over every bar and riffle, sometimes by men standing on the log and "heeling it," or more often in the water which still retains its winter's chill. And thus, wading and "sacking" logs, the rear crew works wet to the waist from daylight to dark, until the drive is down and the rear rests on "solid jam." The hours have been long, the exposure great, the work heavy; but the pay has been double ordinary wages; they have been fed four hearty meals a day, and at night the tents have been pitched one remove nearer the town, where each man may convert his earnings into what he most desires.

In these last days, with bursting buds and balmy airs and soothing sunshine, come relaxations. Ere the scale of ice has quite ceased to form at night, the fun begins. There are contests of skill, in which the winner rolls the loser off the log. Men ride logs as they go racing down through the foaming chutes of dams, and whenever there is a "hole in the water" a laugh goes up from the crew, which you can hear a mile away. The drive ended, the pevies are stacked, the last meal eaten, and with his "time" in his pocket and his "turkey," a two-bushel bag in which he carries his belongings, strung over his shoulder, the shanty boy starts with sturdy stride and a merry heart for town.

His boot-top is fringed behind, where he has cut slits to tally each day's work, and so check the foreman in his book-keeping. The bottoms are set, both ball and heel, with sharp steel calks to make his footing always sure, and soon these are piercing familiar door-sills, and humble floors, and there amidst meetings and greetings, I leave the shanty boy, wishing him all the good he deserves, and who is there deserves more?

Loggers' Footgear.

India-rubber brogan. | Old-fashioned boot-pack. | Sluicer's boot with calks. | Modern rubber-soled boot-pack. | Buckskin and leather moccasin.

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UNDER COVER OF THE DARKNESS.

By T. R. Sullivan.

"IT is not so very dreadful to look at!" said little Van Voort to his companion, Mrs. Stuyvesant Nevil, the graceful, fair-haired lady of Nevilsbeck-on-Hudson, as she pointed with her whip to a white wall glistening in the October sunshine on one of the nearer hills.

He had lived all but a week under her hospitable roof, the most insignificant member, surely, of the merry party assembled there. More than once during the visit he had asked himself why his hostess should have chosen to confer upon him, of all the eligible single men she knew, the honor of her invitation. "It was not for my *beaux yeux*," he had modestly decided; "nor for my brilliant wit, nor for any heroic qualities that I possess." Then, with a mild access of self-appreciation, he had continued: "After all, I am amiable enough, and make as good padding as most men of twenty-eight, perhaps. Who knows? She may have wanted me, because——" And here, at the conjunction leading to an unutterable hope, his doubt always ended desperately in a sigh. The fact being that if Peter Van Voort did not know precisely why he had been asked to Nevilsbeck, he knew perfectly well why, leaving the law to languish in its musty precincts, he had arrived on the appointed day in the same train with the "why" itself. That very palpable cause was embodied in the lovely figure of a certain Miss Alice Thornton, around whom the young lawyer's sleeping and waking thoughts had long revolved at a respectful distance. She was a tall and slender brunette, with flashing eyes as yet undimmed by any serious distrust or weariness of all the conventional frivolities at New York, Newport, and Lenox, where they had reflected much genuine admiration; where little Van Voort, as he was usually called, describing his peculiar orbit, had admired them too, and only once had shown a disposition to fly off at a tangent and run the risk of total extinction in the white heat of their latent scorn. His first hint at such a deviation had been skilfully met by a hint from her of a warning tendency; whereupon, he had dropped back into his old course ere the new one was fairly taken, to cherish afterward the melancholy consolation that a girl could not be said to have refused what had never been offered her. His relations with this girl—the only one for him—were, thanks to his adroitness, still of the friendliest, and they would continue so until he should make an abject fool of himself, or the right man should intervene. Why this acceptable lucky dog did not straightway come to the front was a mystery to poor Van Voort. All men must love Miss Thornton at first sight; of that he felt sure. Under cover of its counterfeit indifference his faint heart was cursed with a vivid imagination that could intensify the most nebulous signs into portents of calamity. The approach of every stranger, therefore, was enough to make him grind his teeth and mutter: "This is he!" Jealousy, without just claim or title, has always been the lover's privilege, and Peter Van Voort exercised it to a comical degree, dreading all the while the inevitable hour of his discomfiture. The one-sided passion could end in no other way; the fates had taken care of that, according to a bitter thought of which his glass often reminded him. For Miss Thornton must certainly be half a head taller than her inexpressive lover; and, were it not so, alas! that lover's hair was red.

As this sad reflection serves to show, there was in Peter's nature a quaint dash of superstition, inherited, probably, from some credulous ancestor whose way of life had been regulated

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by stars and omens. So, when Mrs. Nevil's invitation turned up with Miss Thornton's name casually mentioned in it, he yielded instantly to a fateful whisper which told him that now something conclusive was about to happen, and wrote his acceptance then and there. What did happen, after two or three days of Miss Thornton's society, was that Peter, already deep in love, became completely submerged by it, and madly jealous of a fellow-guest, Falconer by name — a stranger, of course—an Englishman. The grounds for such uneasiness were of the slightest. Mr. Falconer, a cultivated man of the world, strove to make himself agreeable, and succeeded. Miss Thornton walked with him and talked with him, but no more than she did with Peter Van Voort himself, as actual computation, had that been expedient, would have demonstrated. On the third evening, their hostess, carrying out a well-conceived scheme of rotation, placed Mr. Falconer next Miss Thornton at dinner, and allotted to the envious Peter a seat on the other side of the table. With outrageous perfidy the latter immediately devoted one ear to the absorption of every syllable from his opposite neighbors that could possibly reach it, earning well-deserved agony thereby. In his stern judgment the fragments of conversation thus overheard were too informal for a three-days' acquaintance, and one utterance of Miss Thornton distinctly displeased him. This was to the effect that no man could be worthy of consideration who had not made a fool of himself at least once. He did not know what had led to the remark, and he tried in vain to catch Mr. Falconer's reply. The sentiment could hardly be charged with excess of tenderness, and to the eavesdropper it should have been rather hopeful than otherwise, since capacity for folly was assuredly his. But he thought its tone intimate and familiar, and, losing all power of reasoning, decided that things had come to a pretty pass when an upstart foreigner could snatch away, before his very face, the one prize worth winning. From this frenzied mood he declined into one of gentle melancholy, to dream that night of serving as best man at Mr. Falconer's wedding to Miss Thornton, and of flinging with his own hand, as earnest of good luck, a farewell slipper that struck the happy bridegroom directly between the eyes.

On the following day the tables turned a little in Van Voort's favor, and he became more like himself. Upon their long afternoon drive in the six-seated wagon, Mr. Falconer sat behind with Mrs. Nevil, while Miss Thornton occupied the box-seat beside their host; Peter, placed between them, discoursed contentedly, and for the most part coherently, with Mrs. Blair, of Buffalo, a lively widow old enough to be his mother—a guest who did not count, as he took delight in reflecting, but whose ample shoulders, together with his own, broadened for the occasion, made a barrier that neither looks nor speech could pass. He, on the other hand, without being called to account, could make an exhaustive study of certain lines in the face he liked best, and estimate the length of the loveliest eyelashes in the world; then, leaning forward at some carefully chosen moment, he could put in an effective word about the landscape, causing Miss Thornton to turn this way or that, precisely as he pleased. The splendors of the autumnal foliage were already incomparable, and it was a pity that she should lose one flash of gold or crimson, even though they had left it far behind.

Nevilsbeck, as all who have ever seen it will remember, lies high above the Hudson's eastern shore, at one of its finest points. Venerable oaks and beeches with their protecting arms encircle the estate, which is thus sheltered and shielded from the public gaze. Through the branches, however, one may look from within over slopes of lawn and meadow to the steep sides of Cro'nest and Dunderberg, with the broad, stately river flowing silently between in a curve so sharp that the resistless current seems no current at all, but only the smooth expanse of a lake, cut off from communication with the outer world by wooded hills. The surrounding country is of wonderfully varied beauty, and its natural pictu-

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resqueness is impressed upon the mind by the charm so often lacking in America—that of historical tradition. Memories of Washington start up at every turn; under this tree he was wont to tie his horse; that range of highlands, dark against the sky, once blazed with his signal-fires; in these level cornfields his army lay encamped; here he often lodged—here he founded the Society of the Cincinnati. The narrow river-road, now strewn with fallen leaves from the interlacing tree-tops overhead, gives occasional glimpses of high-pitched Dutch roofs, antedating the Revolution and stored with its remembrances. Every fine association beneath them, from the high wainscot of the "Lafayette Chamber" to the blackened ancestral portrait and parchment indenture yellow with age, is still watched and tended reverently, as such things in cities never can be. And when twilight gathers, a spell of the past steals like a mist over all the land, to make one who walks alone there turn at the least sound with startled looks, half dreading, half hoping that some spectral orderly, burdened with a weighty message from head-quarters, will come charging down upon him.

Away from the river, wide, broken ridges, thinly settled or left in all their primitive wildness, rise gradually toward the mountain chain beyond. And over these uplands the Nevilsbeck party drove that afternoon to return by a back road, rarely travelled, unfamiliar to them all. One solitary house loomed up a long way in advance, and this, as they drew nearer, proved to be deserted. The tower-like building of stone and stucco, octagonal in form, had a forbidding air which aroused Miss Thornton's curiosity, and Mr. Nevil then informed her that it had not been inhabited within his recollection; moreover, that, according to common rumor, it was haunted. Thereupon, all the way home, the whole company with one voice persistently plied him with questions. Who built the house? who owned it? whose was the ghost? what stories had led to the rumor? what, in fact, did Mr. Nevil know? He knew very little, and, lacking the presence of mind to invent exciting details, gave answers that were highly unsatisfactory—his only positive statement being that the house was put up by a rich recluse of eccentric tastes, early in the century. The man was dead, undoubtedly, and the property had fallen into utter neglect, as anybody could see. But he, Stuyvesant Nevil, had no faith in ghosts. Those who believed such tales might investigate them if they chose—it was no affair of his. He did not even know what rooms the house contained, or how they were arranged to conform to the unusual plan of the building. The old barrack was desolate, ugly, and empty, of course. He had never thought it worth the delay of a moment; the idea of crossing its threshold had never occurred to him.

That evening, Mr. Van Voort, to his intense delight, was accorded the privilege of sitting next Miss Thornton at dinner. Naturally, their talk reviewed the experiences of the afternoon, and they dwelt for some time upon the strange old house, its original construction, its abandonment. Miss Thornton declared that she more than half believed in ghosts, and that, if ever one walked, it must certainly be there; the mystery of the place oppressed her even at this long range. She was afraid to go to bed, and knew she should dream of octagons with shrieks in them, all night. Then Peter, by way of falling in agreeably with her train of thought, said he had a strong desire, almost a resolve, in fact, to steal away from this light company and pass a night among the octagons and ghosts, if ghosts there were.

"What? Alone?" asked his lovely neighbor, with a shiver of surprise.

"Alone, of course; no ghost of any dignity would appear to a gang of investigators."

Miss Thornton raised a glass to her lips, as if to conceal the scornful smile which this gesture really accentuated.

"I am not afraid of your doing that," said she.

"Ah! and why?"

"You haven't imagination enough for it; besides, you would never dare."

Peter tingled to his finger-tips, but

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suppressing the indignant answer that this implied contempt provoked, he only said, quietly, "That sounds very much like a challenge."

"Oh, challenges are out of date," lightly continued Miss Thornton. "We live in a matter-of-fact age—a prudent one."

"But the eternal truths go on through all the ages," replied Van Voort, surprising himself by a sudden facility of poetical expression. "And then,

> 'One hope is too like despair
> For prudence to smother,'

even in an unimaginative man."

"I don't quite understand you," said Miss Thornton, playing with the stem of the glass which she had set down. "What do you mean?"

"A great deal that I can't express," confessed Van Voort, laughing. "I hoped that you had imagination enough for two."

Just then, a wave of general conversation swept over the table, and when they were left to themselves again, Miss Thornton still clung to the very practical issue raised by it concerning a new scheme of popular education. Van Voort listened to her views on this important subject with the deepest interest—as he would have done had she chosen to consider in an equally grave manner the best method of supplying the market with Dutch cheeses.

Van Voort was always a good listener, and after dinner, in the smoking-room, he sat somewhat apart from the others, apparently intent upon all that was said, but with very little to say. When the men moved on into the drawing-room, he crossed at once toward Mrs. Nevil, who happened to be standing near a door that led to the conservatory. Her attention was called by his first remark to the graceful curve of a banana-tree glistening in the soft light of Chinese lanterns; and, instinctively, they passed out to look at its newest leaf just ready to unfold. In a moment they were talking with an earnestness which induced them to make two or three rounds of the place before Mrs. Blair's prelude to a song of her own composing. Even after this, their talk went on in the pauses of the music. Evidently they had found a subject of mutual interest in which the others were not called upon to share; for the company had broken up into little groups, each concerned with some subject of its own. When all came together to say good-night, Van Voort turning to Miss Thornton, wished her pleasant dreams. And the spirit of mischief prompted her to answer:

"Dreams! I shall have none. I shall lie awake all night, and think of you and your haunted house."

"Thank you," said he. "I suppose this is your apology for doubting my courage."

"Oh, no! It is only the opportunity I give you to prove me in the wrong."

"Why should I try to prove that? If I saw ghosts enough to turn my hair white, you would never accept the statement of my adventures."

At this suggestion of a possible change in his very brilliant coloring, Miss Thornton could not repress a smile. "That would be strong circumstantial evidence," said she; "but even without it, I should regard your testimony as extremely valuable."

"As that of an unimaginative man, you mean."

"Precisely. This is the opportunity of your life."

"Ah, indeed! Then I must consider it very seriously."

"Pray do; but if you go, please wrap yourself up well. These October nights are cool, and ghosts, you know, bring their own chill with them."

Then as she went upstairs with a mocking laugh, this unconscious disturber of the peace whispered to herself:

"How delightful, if he really were to go! But then he would see nothing, and only catch a shocking cold. I shouldn't like to be held responsible for that. What nonsense! It's all a silly joke, of course."

So she dismissed the matter, which, nevertheless, returned more than once to torment her absurdly, as trifles will, at times, when the lights are out and all is still. Her dreams were far from pleasant, and she started from them to

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hear strange noises that came to nothing; but she passed a wakeful night, appearing very promptly at the breakfast-table, where, fortunately, no one seemed to observe that she looked paler than usual.

Breakfast, at Nevilsbeck, was an informal meal, never exacting rigid punctuality. One by one, the guests presented themselves, until but a single chair stood vacant. Then Miss Thornton, who had watched the door open for each fresh arrival with increasing intentness, could bear it no longer.

"Where can Mr. Van Voort be?" she asked, leaning across the unoccupied place toward her hostess, at whose left it was.

Had her conscience been entirely clear, she might have noticed a slight look of embarrassment in Mrs. Nevil's face as she replied:

"Mr. Van Voort? Oh, he will be here presently. He came down very early, and went to the village—on business, I believe."

So he was neither frozen to death nor devoured by goblins. Miss Thornton, reassured, cut an egg in two with a swift, expressive stroke of her knife, and levelled a sarcastic smile at her victim as he came in, glowing from his morning walk.

"Well?" said Mrs. Nevil, when the greetings were over.

"Well," repeated Van Voort, "it is too true. I must start for Schenectady in an hour. Those depositions won't wait. I can't postpone them. But I shall be here again to-morrow; by noon, I hope."

"What! Going away!" said everybody at once; and Peter was obliged to repeat his statement that imperative business demanded this sacrifice. The affliction, however, would be but temporary; he should return at the earliest possible moment.

"Very clever of you!" whispered Miss Thornton, when, after due regret, the talk had turned another way. "The depositions won't wait, and the ghosts will."

"Until I come back, at least," replied Peter, in the same tone.

"Oh, then it would be much too late. Our party breaks up early the next morning. We should have no time to take that deposition."

"I really believe," said Peter, smiling, "that you wanted me to watch out a night in that grewsome place."

"And did you really expect me," she asked, disdainfully, "to throw a gauntlet down?"

"I would not do that if I were you," said he. "Do you remember Schiller's poem about a glove?"

"Not clearly. I believe I read it once at school. Is it a case in point?"

"It has a very pointed moral, which I recommend to your notice during my deplorable absence. You can probably find the book in the library."

"Thank you for suggesting even this small consolation for my bereavement," she said, adopting his satirical vein. "I will read your poet's moral, and think of you meanwhile."

When they left the table all gathered in the front porch to speed the parting guest, who refused to let Mr. Nevil drive him to the station. His luggage was already there, he explained; he had taken it down before breakfast; and as he must sit for hours in the train, exercise now was what he most desired. So, with many good wishes for a swift journey and a short one, Van Voort strode briskly away, alone; but at the first turn of the avenue he stopped to light a cigar, and then, convincing himself that no one had followed, he went on leisurely to the gate. There, instead of the short cut to the station, he took precisely the opposite course, skirting by the river-road the lower boundary of Nevilsbeck, and at its farthest point climbing its low wall to push his way through the hedge into a sunny corner just behind it. Here, as the house was nearly half a mile away, he felt secure from disturbance; moreover, without being seen, he could see all that passed in the road. A farmer's wagon rattled by, then another; then he waited patiently through a long interval of silence, smoked his cigar to the bitter end, and even started a second one, but only to fling it away at the sound of light wheels coming nearer. A cautious glance assured him that these were the wheels of a pony-cart driven by a woman who had no companion, and leaping

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down just as Mrs. Nevil stopped, he took the seat beside her, and was whirled away without a word.

"It is not dreadful at all in this light," Mrs. Nevil agreed; "but think of it with no light at all! Does not your heart fail you?"

"Not yet," said Peter, laughing. "I think, upon the whole, I prefer it to Schenectady."

"That fib of yours was really dreadful," replied Mrs. Nevil. "It is the worst feature in our little plot; and on account of it I came very near betraying you."

"You take it far too seriously," Peter protested. "I should simply have been badgered to death if anybody had suspected my scheme of passing a night in your haunted house. I defended myself by one of those innocent white lies without which society could never exist. Where is the harm?"

Mrs. Nevil sighed, half in jest, half in earnest. "I wish no harm may come of it, for I feel horribly guilty," said she. "But you will have leisure to repent many times over before night comes. See! we are almost on the ground. How will you ever live till sunset here, alone?"

"I must forage, in the first place, and find some friendly farm-house to keep me in supplies. This one will do—no, it is deserted."

"This, and the next, too. Repent, and let me drive you back again. The ghosts have blighted all the land."

But Van Voort assured her that fasting would do him good, since of late he had been royally entertained; and so, talking and laughing, they drove on slowly up the hill-road shadowed on either side by a row of the pointed dark-green cedars that flourish throughout this region. To Van Voort's mind these suggested the plumes of a hearse. The thought struck him as clever; but upon expressing it he was told not to say such things. At the brow of the hill they stopped for a moment to look down upon other hill-sides lying between this point and the river, the course of which only could be traced by the bluer line of hills beyond it. Few signs of cultivation were apparent, and it seemed to Mrs. Nevil that humanity was very far away; she eyed the gaunt, untenanted house now close beside them, and shivered a little in spite of the noon sunshine.

"I don't like to leave you here," she said.

Van Voort smiled. "What danger can there be?" he asked. "Let us explore the place together; we shall find nothing very frightful, as you will see."

He tied the pony at the gate, and took from the back of the cart various small articles stowed away there. These included two heavy railway rugs, a hand-bag containing a lantern and whiskey-flask, with a basket of food which his hostess had thoughtfully provided in advance of the proposed foraging expedition, lest it should be unsuccessful. Having discreetly procured a pistol that morning in the village, he was thus equipped for any emergency. While he busied himself with these things, Mrs. Nevil walked slowly up the grass-grown path; one old apple-tree stretched across it, and under its scanty shade she stopped suddenly.

"Did you hear that?" she asked.

Van Voort had, in fact, been startled by a sharp sound from the house, like that of a falling board. "There is a tenant, then," said he, coming up; "or perhaps, only some chance visitor like ourselves. In any case, we will say 'by your leave!'" He shouted, accordingly, more than once, without receiving an answer. There was no further sound, no movement; the huge windows stared blankly, like expressionless eyes; their light wooden balconies hung all awry in the last stages of dilapidation. It was inconceivable that any tenant in this world should take up with such an abode.

A broad flight of steps led to the main entrance, but nearer at hand a window stood open; and through this the explorers passed somewhat doubtfully, groping their way along the dimly lighted cellar to a staircase, up which they climbed in silence. At the top was a door that would not open. Beyond its glass panels, however, they could see a high, octagonal room, entirely dismantled and much stained by the wear and tear of conflicting ele-

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ments; for one whole side had fallen away, and the wide gap extending from floor to cornice was bounded only by the sky. As they looked, a patch of plaster dropped from the mouldy ceiling and crumbled into dust. Mrs. Nevil drew back instinctively to retrace her steps toward the light. But Van Voort, more persistent, soon called to her that he had found other stairs. Here there was no obstruction, and they stood in another moment on the main floor of the building, with the sunshine streaming over them.

Simple as the interior plan proved to be, it was also to the last degree unconventional. Four eight-sided rooms, painted white, with elaborately stuccoed ceilings, were connected by folding-doors, the many spaces between forming angular cupboards or oblique, superfluous passages. The main hall was, of necessity, triangular. From a smaller one behind it a spiral staircase, lighted from the roof, wound to the upper stories. There was no furniture, and as all the doors stood open, a new vista, bare, white, and still like the rest, presented itself at every turn.

"I don't like it," said Mrs. Nevil, decidedly. Then, as if her own voice startled her, she continued, in a lower tone: "Nothing but doors! Did you ever see so many?"

"Doors can't hurt us so long as they are open," returned Van Voort, laughing. "One—two—three"—he went as far as sixteen, and then stopped. "Too many to count," he complained; "let us try the floor above."

Upon reaching it Mrs. Nevil declared that she was afraid either to go on or to go back, and clutching Van Voort's arm, forbade him to move one step from her side. The silent spaces she looked at were curiously divided into many small rooms, some of which, much too large for closets and windowless, seemed to her like prison-cells. This comparison was the more obvious from the fact that their doors bore traces of numbers which formerly had been attached to them. With a single exception, these doors, like the others below, stood open, revealing angles upon angles all festooned with cobwebs. But the closed room, once numbered 26, soon engrossed Mrs. Nevil's attention.

"What can be there?" she wondered, tremulously.

"Darkness," replied Van Voort; "we shall find nothing else in it. See!" He turned the handle as he spoke, but the door stuck fast, and would not yield, though he exerted all his strength.

"I give it up," he said, finally; "the door is locked."

"Yes, or bolted on the inside," whispered Mrs. Nevil, bringing all the force of her imagination to bear upon it. "Hark!"

They listened, but heard no sound either within or without; and as Van Voort was bent upon seeing all that could be seen, Mrs. Nevil, unwilling to be left behind, went on with him to an upper floor, and beyond that to the glass lantern by which the stairs were lighted; where she lost all fear for the moment in her delight at an unrivalled view of the sunlit landscape. Her nervous dread of nothing reappeared, however, as soon as they turned back among those empty chambers where nothing was but silence; and only in the outer air did she breathe freely enough to express her conviction that, the sooner the ruined house went entirely to pieces, the better.

Confused by the darkness of the cellar, they had come out of it on the side directly opposite the window through which they had entered, to find themselves in what had once been a garden enclosed by high stone walls. Its beds and paths were overgrown, but here and there late autumn flowers struggled through the long grass. There was a gateway in the wall, and, crossing to it, they saw that the land sloped away abruptly toward a cottage unobserved before, standing just within the grounds under a clump of willows, on a lower spur of the hill. The place had no very thrifty air, but it was occupied; and presently one of its occupants, a woman, came out to greet them with a pleasant smile. She was of middle age, and looked older. Life must have given her much to think about, yet her expression showed that she tried habitually to make the best of whatever it afforded.

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"You have been over the house," she said; "and you found——"

"Nothing," said Mrs. Nevil. "No one lives here?"

"No, indeed."

"And that is your house?"

"I can't say it is," said the woman, wearily. "The owner lets me live there, that's all. I have been in it these five years, and yet I've never seen him. His agent came once, a long while ago."

"And this place?" said Van Voort, glancing up at the white walls behind him.

"There ain't much left of it now—except the ghost folks tell about."

"What kind of ghost?" he inquired.

The woman smiled with a puzzled look. "Why—a two-legged one," said she. Whereupon they laughed, all three, and then Van Voort asked if she had ever seen the ghost herself.

"No," she answered. "There's all kinds of noises, nights—but the wind makes 'em, I say. I took a lantern once, and went everywhere—all over—but there wa'n't anything that I could find."

Mrs. Nevil's face displayed mingled amusement and admiration. Though a deliberate, systematic search for a ghost by lantern-light seemed a task doomed to failure from the outset, nevertheless it showed a strength of nerve in the seeker that to her mind was wholly commendable. Meanwhile Van Voort gravely solicited further information in the way of any story or stories of dreadful import that might be currently reported.

"Well," returned the woman, betraying by her dry, unemotional manner an utter want of faith in the popular superstition, "they do say a child was murdered once on that balcony, and that the stain shows there yet; but I've never seen it."

"And is that all?" Mrs. Nevil asked.

"Yes; everything."

"It seems hardly worth while for you to pass the night here," mused Mrs. Nevil, turning to Van Voort. But he was already on the balcony, absorbed in the hope of discovering the stain.

"Oh, he may stop if he likes," said their new-found hostess, who, at the thought of a possible honest penny to be turned, became a shade less uncompromising in her incredulity. "May be the ghost would show itself to him. And I could give the gentleman dinner and supper, too," she added, persuasively.

Van Voort came back with an admission that he had discovered nothing. "But I shall stay out my night, of course," said he; "I have gone too far to cheat the ghost of his opportunity."

The three walked slowly toward the cottage, which, if somewhat out of repair, looked scrupulously neat. Two children were playing before the door; their mother, it appeared, was a widow; an elder son — a good boy, she said — helped to support the family by daily labor at a distant farm. The sight of this peaceful household quieted certain misgivings that Mrs. Nevil had forborne fully to express, and even reconciled her to leaving Van Voort behind; he would not be left alone, she reflected, whatever came to pass. So, with a word or two of caution and repeated promises to send for him very early in the morning, she drove away.

There was a long afternoon to kill, and Van Voort despatched the greater part of it by a brisk walk among the hills. Wherever he went, the huge white house always remained in sight, constantly inclining him to laugh at the absurdity of his position, which implied a childish adherence to the supernatural not at all his, as he assured himself. He had been drawn into a foolish escapade, but, being in, must go on with it to the end; ignominious retreat would not mend matters now; the proper course was to accept the situation merely for what it was worth, and treat the adventure lightly. Yet, as the afternoon waned, the prospect of his lonely ordeal became to Van Voort less and less laughable; already he began to count the hours of darkness, to reflect that the night would be clear and still, with a moon rising late. The little family at the cottage welcomed him back with considerable solemnity. The son, who had returned from his work, proved to be a sturdy youth of simple manners and few words. Like his mother, he was discreetly sceptical concerning the result of Van Voort's experiment; but, evidently, neither of

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the two saw anything ludicrous in the stranger's resolve to make such an investigation. With kindly forethought, they had carried a mattress up to the deserted house and improvised a bed for him there, in one of the great drawing-rooms. In return, he contributed to the evening meal Mrs. Nevil's basket of provisions, enjoying their hearty appreciation of its abundance; for them the horn of plenty had overflowed. At table, striving to obtain further details about the estate, its present ownership, its former occupant or occupants, he learned next to nothing. The house had been vacant for thirty years at least, that was certain; and it had probably changed tenants, if not owners, once or twice in the preceding generation. A vague story of its use as a school at some former time, attempted to account for the numbered doors. The widow paid no rent for the cottage, of which she had quietly possessed herself upon the advice of a neighbor; when the agent made his visit, long afterward, he had seemed rather pleased than otherwise at this unwarranted proceeding, and had allowed her to stay on, in the hope, perhaps, of freeing the place from its bad name. But this hope, if it existed, had not been realized; on the contrary, the mysterious dwelling where no one dwelt was known for miles around as the haunted house, and shunned by everybody even in broad daylight. Smoking his cigar while the dusk deepened and the stars came out one by one, Van Voort heard these things, and heartily wished that bedtime were well over. Yet, when the hour came he was quite equal to it; lighting his lantern, he bade the cottagers good-night without the slightest tremor either in hand or voice, and cheered his solitary way by the thought that as the night was uncommonly warm for the season, the danger of a cold, really his only practical cause for alarm, diminished proportionately. Two or three bats beat their wings against the cellar arches as he passed them by, but in the rooms above were no signs of life. He paused for a moment at the gap in the wall to look out at the night. Below him lay the neglected garden, with a faint light beyond it from a window in the cottage. While he looked, this glimmer was extinguished, and no other lights shone in all the dark land beneath; but overhead the stars stood out like balls of flame; never had their flickering splendors seemed so near, so inexplicable. The crickets called incessantly, now far away, now piping shrill notes at his very feet. And these familiar sights and sounds were all.

Turning to the modest quarters considerately prepared for him, Van Voort wrapped himself in his blankets, and camped out for the night. The lantern at his side detached its luminous circle of a few yards in circumference from the prevailing gloom that, elsewhere, was relieved only by the window spaces with their glimpses of the shining sky. After starting up a number of times at those impressions of sound which the walls of an old country-house always supply to a sensitive ear, this restless watcher resolved that nothing intangible should rouse him again, and composed himself to sleep. As usual, the resolution became a factor of disturbance; the light disturbed him, too, and he put it out, but with no better result; he was forced to accept wakefulness as inevitable. His thoughts reverted to the party at Nevilsbeck, where it was hardly bed-time yet; he wondered what they were all doing, and what colors Miss Thornton wore. Ah, Miss Thornton! He had beaten about the bush with her too long. He must come to the point at once, make his poor little offer, and be forever disqualified by it, he supposed. What words should he find to touch her heart, and make his love anything but ridiculous in her eyes? How limited the vocabulary was! He framed speech after speech, and none expressed what he felt and wished to say. "I love you!" said it all, to be sure, but there was nothing new or startling in that. He could see her vainly trying not to smile as she listened, and answering him with the hope that they might always be good friends. No! he hoped she would spare him that. The refusal must be the end of it. Afterward, he would go somewhere a long way off and live alone. So he rehearsed his little scene with many variations, that

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led always to the same sad ending, until the troubles he had conjured up grew less and less distinct, and finally melted away altogether in a sleep too deep for dreams.

He slept thus for several hours, to find himself suddenly wide-awake without apparent cause. All was quiet, with no change that he could discover, except in the sky, where a waning moon had risen. Its pale light streamed through one of the farther windows along the floor; but his corner was the darker for it, so that, half rising, he felt for his matches and struck one to look at his watch-face. Past two o'clock! All well, and the small hours growing larger! He laughed, as making this reflection, he prepared to settle down again. Then his ears caught a sound so startling in its distinctness that he held his breath to listen. There could be no mistake; it was the sound of digging, not in the house, but close at hand. He distinguished the click of the spade in the ground, the rattle of stones and loose earth thrown out; and the longer he listened, the clearer became these evidences that the noise was actual. Who had stolen here to this desolate place, in the dead of night, for so strange a purpose? What was the purpose underlying it? What talent could he be hiding in the earth? What treasure was he seeking?

Van Voort, with an instant desire to know these things, crept upon all-fours, through favoring shadows, to the nearest window; only to recognize there the familiar fact that precise direction of sound is not to be determined by the ear alone. The mysterious laborer was nowhere in sight, yet his labor still went on; and Van Voort, moving stealthily from window to window, at last looked down upon him through no window at all, but through the great fissure of the adjoining room. There, waist-deep in the earth of the walled garden below, stood this tiller of the ground, plying his spade and pickaxe vigorously by a lantern's light, devoting all his thought and strength to his untimely task, which Van Voort suddenly divined with a shock that almost betrayed him into a cry of horror. The man was digging a grave; there could be no doubt of it. And close upon the chill of this discovery came another equally startling; for, at a pause in his ghastly work he turned his face for a moment toward the light. It was the face of a man widely known and esteemed, an American of wealth and position, long past the prime of life, bearing a name spoken with respect the world over. Van Voort knew him not only from his untarnished reputation, but also from the personal acquaintance that, never approaching intimacy, may exist for years, without change of degree, between a young man and an older one meeting in the world from time to time. These two had often met, and on Van Voort's side respect had deepened into admiration. To him, therefore, this presence and its appalling motive were doubly incomprehensible. He turned away in the dark, trembling with a nameless fear; then retreating to one of the more distant rooms, he paced it up and down while his mind exhausted itself in a vain effort to bring his doubts to a reasonable conclusion; until, oppressed by the strain, he shaped new terrors from the pallid moonlight and started at his own shadow on the floor. He groped for his lantern and lighted it; but no sooner was this done than there occurred to him the thought that other intruders might be concealed in the house. Again he crouched motionless to listen, but heard only the ringing of the spade out of doors in the coarse gravel; yet still unconvinced, drawing his pistol and holding the light above his head, he peered into one vacant passage after another; then cautiously climbed the staircase to the second floor. Nothing stirred there, nothing was altered in the least—yes, one thing! The door of the closed room upon which he had wasted ineffectual force that morning now stood half open. He rushed on and swung this inward at a touch, only to stagger back with a cry that echoed from wall to wall. The floor within was partially torn up, exposing the space between it and the ceiling underneath. There was blackness, nothing more; but between this hollow and the door, on two loose boards supported by a trestle roughly

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made, lay the fragments of a human skeleton.

Steadying himself by the stair-rail, Van Voort felt for his flask and made a long draught upon it. His strength, which had threatened to forsake him, returned, and from being numb and cold he was on fire. Nothing now disturbed the death-like silence that his cry had broken; and even without this assurance he knew that but one encounter threatened him. The grave-digger, outside, had come alone upon his dismal errand, the full significance of which could be summed up in a single word. He was a murderer, no more, no less; his crime, hidden away in the walls of this old house, had escaped punishment and defied detection; but these mute defenders of the secret were no longer to be trusted; one already had fallen outward, laying bare recesses that the very rats feared to inhabit. The criminal, warned in time as he imagined, had heeded the warning and had chosen this night of all others to give his victim a final resting-place. The one chance in a thousand attending all human endeavor to confront it with a higher law than that of chance, had brought upon the scene an unwilling witness, whose heart sank under the weight of the fearful duty that seemed thrust upon him.

All this flashed through Van Voort's mind in a moment, as if he had seen it in fiery letters upon one of the crumbling walls. But the flash went out, leaving in its place nothing but perplexity. His quick-coming thoughts were all confused, and what to do next he could not determine. Would there be time to summon help? Might not delay afford the murderer an opportunity for escape, or some false step give notice of his danger? Armed as Van Voort was, he might surprise the man, hold him at bay, make him a prisoner. Morning was not so far off, and with the morning help would come. Yet this course had its obvious risks; to watch, unseen, perhaps were wiser. No, impossible, with the fierce impulse that he felt to stop the work then and there! These cunning criminals were cowards of the meanest sort. This one was in his power; he had the whip-hand—why not use it? If so, it must be now. Those steps below meant that the grave was ready. The time to act had come.

He blew out his light and withdrew to the upper staircase, fixing his eyes upon one point a few feet down, where the curving rail met the darkness. The man came on, casting strange lights and shadows with his lantern swung before him. He reached Van Voort's objective point and passed it; then saw the pistol-muzzle almost at his throat, and recoiled in amazement, whiter than the wall against which he leaned.

"Stop!" cried Van Voort, making no effort to choose his words; "what are you doing here?"

The other knew him instantly. "Van Voort!" he muttered, with a sigh of relief at the recognition. And regaining color and composure on the instant, he gave the question back in perfect self-command. "What, may I ask, are *you* doing here in my house?"

Van Voort's eyes turned involuntarily toward the dark chamber close at hand. "Your house—your house!" he repeated, startled beyond other expression at the calm speech which seemed suddenly to put him in the wrong.

"Mine—yes," said its owner in the same steady voice. "You have pried into its secrets and have misinterpreted them. I cannot blame you. But you are off your guard. Were I the man you think me, I should have shot you down like a dog. There is my pistol!" he added, with a quick turn of his hand flinging a revolver over the rail into the dark. "Put up yours; you will not need it."

Van Voort obeyed mechanically. He had nerved himself for a struggle; he would have laughed at threats, resisted violence. But this quiet air of authority enforced attention and was irresistible. Guilt did not express itself in words like these. He tried to answer them, but faltered.

Without waiting for an answer, the speaker continued, in a tone of the deepest sadness: "It has come, as I feared it would, after these many years. Murder will out, in spite of all that human care can do. Look here, and

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convince yourself. I am not a murderer. I might swear it, and the oath would go for nothing; you would not believe me. But here are proofs which you must see and must admit—they cannot be disputed." Passing on as he spoke, he stopped at the open door and held up the light; then turned impatiently. "Look, I say!"

Van Voort, drawing nearer in utter silence, as if under a spell, watched him as he stooped and shook out the folds of the dead man's garments that lay heaped upon the floor. Only their faded shreds remained, but these were of an age long past, in cut and fashion unfamiliar to the oldest among living men. A fragment of leather, with the tarnished buckle clinging to it, flew outward toward the threshold. He who had worn that must have waited for his grave here in the dark at least a lifetime.

Silently they looked into each other's faces until Van Voort found his speech. "I see," he said; "I understand. How did you know of this? No man on earth could possibly have told you."

Then, in a husky voice that died away at last into a whisper, the other answered him.

"I have known it half my life, and more. The man whose work it was, lived to a great age, free of all suspicion, honored and revered. On his death-bed he called me to him and confessed his crime. For the sake of a name and those who share it with me, I kept the secret—left this house to rack and ruin. I never even saw the place—my property—till word was brought me that its walls were falling. I feared discovery—I came alone, to hide the stain from any eyes but mine, to bury this horror in the earth with my own hands—alone—alone. A fearful attempt to make! Shall I tell you why I made it? Because the man who did this thing, whose memory I tried to save, was——"

"Stop!" Van Voort cried; "I cannot hear the rest. But all I have heard shall be safe with me. The night is going. Finish your work, for heaven's sake, before the morning comes. We are two now instead of one; you have another pair of hands to help you."

The keeper of the secret so nearly told looked up at him with shining eyes, as if meaning to convey his thanks; but could only hide his face in anguish, saying nothing.

"Come!" said Van Voort, moving forward to lay one hand gently upon his shoulder; "there is no time to lose. Will you not trust me? Upon my soul, you may!"

"Yes," he replied, taking the hand in his with a grateful pressure. "Have I not trusted you?"

Then with one accord, speaking only in whispered monosyllables, they bent themselves to what demanded all their energies for its swift accomplishment. Together they replaced the flooring, together lifted the rude bier and carried it out into the garden, laying the unknown victim in his nameless grave. No trace of his existence remained above ground an hour later, when, as a final precaution, they covered his burial-place with fallen leaves. Earth had returned to earth, that through its changing seasons holds the secret of our graves inviolate. So they hoped and prayed it would hold this until the last day.

There were still no signs of morning when all they had to do was done, and the two exchanged a few hurried words; Van Voort accounting for his presence in the house, while its owner stated that his lodging was at a farm two miles off, where he had come ostensibly for a week's shooting. "I must get back before they are awake," he said, gathering up his tools. "Words are nothing, and yet I can only thank you. You have assumed a burden I would never have imposed willingly. Strange! Men share their joys, however trivial; their keenest sorrows they bear alone. And yet your share in this has brought me unspeakable relief. Remember that, and forgive me if you can for the terrible infliction."

"It is nothing—" Van Voort began; but the man was gone, vanishing at the first breath as if he had never been. His presence already seemed remote, unreal—a figure in a dream; yet every detail of the attendant circumstances, from the first stroke of his spade to the last, stood out with awful minuteness, fixed, unalterable.

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For another hour Van Voort paced the echoing rooms, where sleep was no longer possible. At the earliest gray indication of dawn he strode off through the fields in an aimless course, pursuing only light and air, until the sun rose clear and his spirits revived in the friendly warmth of day. Then, turning about, he came suddenly upon a small pond in a hollow of the hills, and bathed there; the water was very cold, but it refreshed him, and with its after-glow tingling through all his veins, he reached the cottage, to find the inmates already stirring in alarm at his absence. A light word reassured them. The house might be haunted, but the ghost clearly had no confidence in him. He must return once more to collect his property. This did not take long, and it was still very early. No one from Nevilsbeck would be likely to appear in the next hour at least; even so, he should probably arrive before day broke for that luxurious household. The thought had hardly occurred to him when he heard wheels coming up the hill. The pony cart! driven not by the groom he expected to see, but by a woman! Mrs. Nevil, then, had risen at daybreak on his account, to come for him herself. He rushed out to signify his sense of obligation, and with inexpressible surprise confronted Miss Alice Thornton.

She stopped the pony with a cry of joy. "Safe and sound!" she said; "I am so thankful."

"You came for me!" he stammered. "How did you know?"

"Mrs. Nevil!" replied Miss Thornton, incoherently. "She couldn't keep the secret. She had to tell somebody, and she whispered it to me—last night, after dinner. I can't tell you how I felt! It was I who sent you to this frightful place, and if anything had happened to you I should never have forgiven myself. I passed a night of horrors. Twice, I dreamed that I saw a man—think of it—digging your grave!"

Too much disturbed to notice the effect upon Van Voort of this odd coincidence, she went on hurriedly, with downcast eyes, growing more and more confused at every sentence.

"When morning came I couldn't bear it longer. The groom had his orders, but I stopped him—no one else knows. I had sent you—I was the one to blame. I said you would not dare—you remember—I never really thought so. And when I thought of you here alone, in the dark, I said you would hate me always, like the man in 'The Glove.' I ought not to have come, I know; but I could not help coming, even if it were only to have you fling the glove back—into my face."

"You never threw it down," said Van Voort, smiling. "I did lie awake here last night thinking of you, but my thoughts were not in the least like yours."

She seemed only partially to hear this speech, and she looked over his shoulder at the house as she answered:

"There, in all that dreariness, at midnight! How could you keep your courage?"

"Midnight courage is a small matter," he replied; "it was early morning courage that I needed. I think it came to me there in the dark, when I found the way to say 'I love you.'"

The pony started, but she checked him instantly, tightening the grasp of her hand upon the reins, naturally too busy in this for speech. She neither spoke nor looked up when Van Voort took the other hand and drew it toward him; but she left the hand lying there in his.

Then they drove down together through the morning sunshine.

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AN ARTIST IN JAPAN.

By Robert Blum.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR.

A Country Road.

AT the end of our wild ride in a tram-car from Kodzu to Tokyo, Peter comes to me with his friend, "the erdest son of Viscount ——," and says, "Mister Brum, arrow me to introduce you my friend Viscount ——." I am delighted at the possibility of adding a new and so rare a specimen to my growing though unclassified collection of Young Japan.

He is pleased to meet me, he likes *all* Americans anyway; he was so long over there—you know. Is glad to learn that we are going to Miyanoshita, and is helpfully officious in directions as to the best way of doing it. He comes often, and as he puts it, "knows the ropes." I should like Miyanoshita—all foreigners did. If I liked walking that would be just the thing, as it was only a matter of four miles or so to the top and jinrikishas were hot and uncomfortable. And so, after seeing, with Peter's help, the things stored properly in 'rikishas, we start off behind in the thick of a very lively conversation. In fact a conversation that never ceased and lagged only when he had nothing to say.

Peter hovers about in the outskirts of our conversation, dazzled like a moth lured by the glare—delighted in his diffidence when the Viscount condescends to speak to him in the vernacular. Ah, Peter of ambitious dreams! Is *this* your ideal?

And how did I like——

"Japan?" Then before he can ask more I rattle through the long list again of what and which and why I like this and that and the other. He walks along in silence for a time then, meditatively,

"But don't you think things are —I don't know—kind o' slow?"

I admit frankly, if somewhat gladly, that this may be the case.

But what he meant was, "no fun going on, no dancing, and—all that, you know." Japan might be interesting, of course, to a foreigner, but after coming from America, as he just had, he must say that he found it "*damned* slow." He had been over there so long and got so used to it, that he couldn't get to feel at home at all. He wondered if I could realize the pleasure it was to simply talk "the lingo" again. He had had a delightful time, and entertained me with accounts of its various phases. But, he dolefully added, his time at Harvard was over, and his father had sent for him to come back and "settle down." His father, in fact, wished him to go into politics. It was solely on his account, too, that he found himself on the verge of matrimony. Yes, his father was building a house for him now, and he was busy thinking how he could

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get some of the comfort of an American home in it. An idea of his modifications, adaptations of his own devising, now followed with much detail. If I remember aright there was even to be a billiard-room in the elaborate plan.

In the rare lapses of this single-handed conversation he would break into scraps of college glees, or whistle snatches of the latest popular songs; and then smilingly refer to them, "D'y'u-ever hear that?" By the way, did I know anyone in Boston, because he had many friends there. Knew Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes very well, and was often at his house. He was quite enthusiastic about the doctor. Always felt free and at home with him somehow. There were others, too, that he liked, but somehow didn't get along so well with them. He remembered how the doctor had once "hauled him over the coals" for not calling oftener on a certain friend of his, and that he, the Viscount, had said he would if the people there only talked to him about something else besides Christianity and George Washington. He said the doctor had laughed heartily. But he had meant what he said, because he didn't like being treated like a foreigner.

But for our climb itself I go back to a letter written at the time.

"HAKONE, August 6, '90.

"DEAR ——: It is raining. Is it rain—this emptying of clouds as they sweep about us, finding their way to the valley below? Sheets—no, that would not explain it as well as—solid masses of it fall about us with a noise, trying to nerves not of the strongest, as you, poor fellow, only know too well. It has been at it all day, and as yet shows no sign of ending. . . . Know that we have travelled much and far away from the seashore—from the place I last wrote you—Enoshima. In these last three days we have been doing some climbing—mountain climbing of an easy, entertaining kind—walking from a railway terminus, or rather tramway terminus, called Yumoto, to Miyanoshita, at which place we stayed overnight, and starting out very early the next morning and crossing the mountains to this place.

"We left Enoshima at sunrise. . . . Were just in time to have tiffin at Miyanoshita. The walk from Yumoto up the mountain-side, I might add, was further enlivened by falling in with a young Japanese who spoke English fluently, with perhaps only just the slightest trace of dropping his l's and substituting r's, as all of them are apt to do. Boston was in the very cut of his clothes. On the whole, a fine and rare, at least to me, specimen of young Japan of the youngest generation. . . .

"Don't ask for a description of Miyanoshita, it isn't worth it, I assure you, on my word as a good friend and—bad painter. It is one of those places you "size up" in your mind, by prejudice, in just hearing people talk about it. Fancy me liking a place which a woman tourist gushed about, in the hotel in Tokyo, as 'just lovely;' the hotel, too, was 'too lovely for anything.' Then she called the place Me, an oyster, to finish with. It is no more Japan than Yokohama is. There is only one little tiny spot down a ravine-like valley, *near* Miyanoshita—a charming little place called Kinga or Kiga—which is worth writing about.

"We were up and away over the mountain before sunrise the day following—Hakoneward. In the cool of the early morning it was pleasant walking, but presently, as the sun became stronger, the uphill work began to tell on us. Before that, with the sun barely risen, as I say, it was pleasant enough to have the company of the fresh, bright morning and its charm of sights and sounds. Birds we heard in plenty. There was one songster who had two long-drawn notes—a sound so closely resembling a human whistle that but for the shrill staccato run in the finish it could easily be mistaken for one coming from a boy's lips—if Japanese whistled. The trip took us through some very beautiful country with a charm peculiar to itself—I mean that a photograph or picture would not give you an idea of it any more than the score does of the music. It was characteristic mountain scenery—not paintable—but impressively beautiful, and appealing more to me as the *man* than as the *painter*.

"Gracious! this *is* a wild day! I wish

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Cherry Blossoms.

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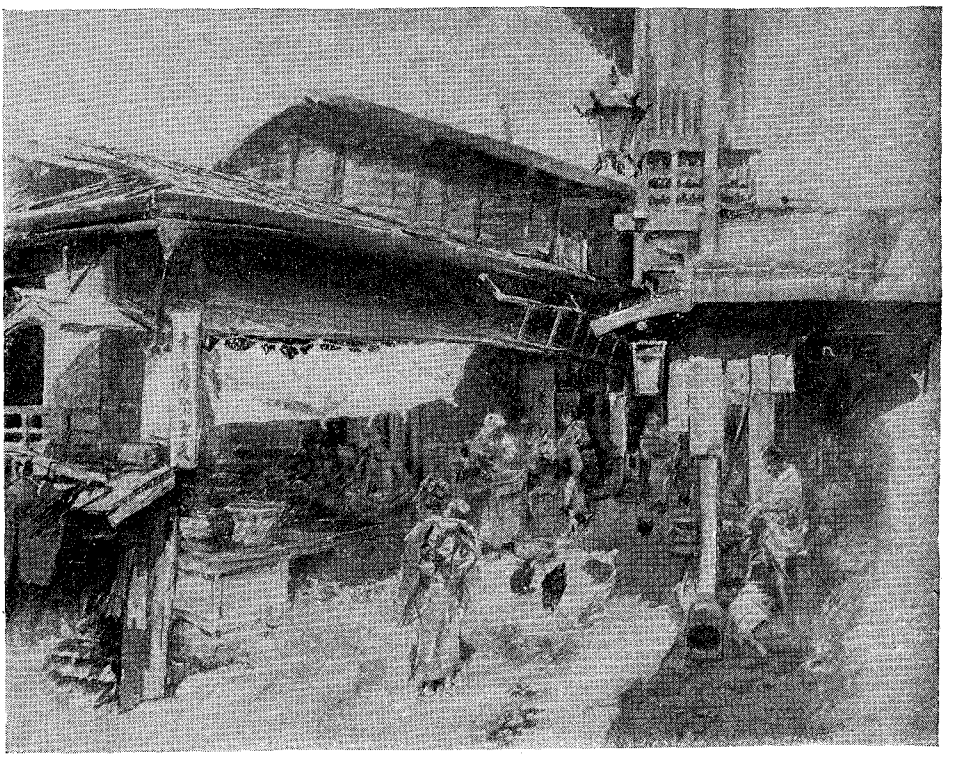
I could send you a small piece of it. The little inn where we are is situated right on the lake, and the water looks like the lagoon at Venice, as you and I have seen it many a time from our little room in Casa Jacowitz. The pelting rain and driving wind make it resemble, in a distant way, a grain-field with the wind sweeping over it. . . . Hakone consists really of a scattered line of some sixty or more houses bordering a road that eventually leads to Tokyo. Just here it touches the lake, swings around it, and then goes wandering away—where, I don't know. The water in the lake is ice-cold, as I know, for I took a bath the first day I came here. I must tell you a rather amusing predicament connected with this rash venture. Right on the edge of the lake is a little summer-house into which I popped, pulled off the Kimono I was wearing at the time and plunged into the water. While I was fooling around I saw two Japanese figures take possession of the pavilion. Fancy! The water was cold enough before that, but I imagined it about ten degrees colder at once. The Japanese friend who is with me had gone, and here I was all alone to work out this rather peculiar problem. Well, I couldn't stay in all day, so finally I came out. Don't ask me how I did it, but I did manage to make it. I managed to work my way to the pavilion to receive my belongings from the hands of the pleasant and polite gentleman, not to mention the towel I had to take from the little woman—needless to say without finding time to use it just then. The whole affair appears ridiculously simple now it is over, and I am afraid I made an amusing ass of myself generally in their eyes. You see I'm too much of a 'barbarian' yet to fall into their fine natural unconsciousness—too full as yet of what might be termed artificial Western prudery. I'll try to do better next time, only you can imagine that a fellow with a body blue



A Street in Ikao.

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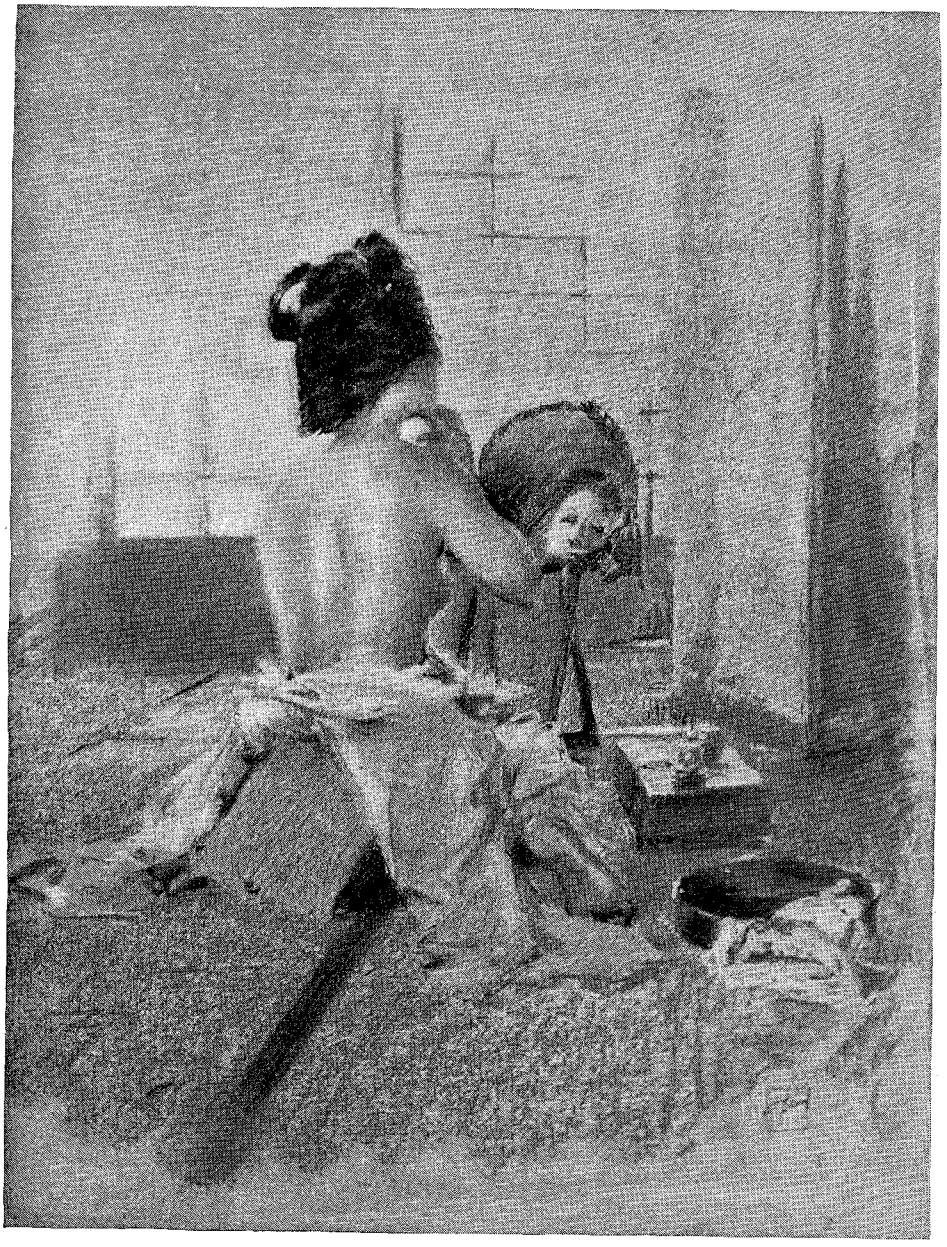

The Toilet.

with cold and shivering in rigid fright is not apt to do just the proper thing.

"We have exhausted the 'sights' of the place long ago, and would have been off across the lake before this but for this wild and terrible weather. There is a temple off in one direction along the road (and that you reach after some tall climbing up innumerable stone steps, and don't see much when you get up); and in the other direction the village oozes into the country before you know it, with nothing more cheerful than a cemetery as an outpost. A cemetery is never a very interesting place to visit; I always feel as if I were clattering with

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dirty shoes into the sanctity of some stranger's home. At a freshly made grave I saw two pairs of clogs—one was a tiny pair, considerably cobbleworn. Poor little tot—a brief existence outworn by the very first of clogs!

"The view of Fuji from here is not what I expected; the mountain is screened for the greater part and only showing slightly above the tall peaks over across the lake. As it was solely on its account that I came here, I am in a measure disappointed. . . ."

"Master, will you condescend."

There was a tramp of some fifteen miles before us as we clambered out of the boat which had ferried us across the length of Hakone Lake. We soon struck the spur of the mountains lying between us and Gotemba, our destination. After the very stormy weather of the preceding days the sun was again shining, and it was amazing to notice the little effect all the rain had made—the soil had absorbed it as cleanly as would a blotter. The mountain was covered with coarse bamboo grass, thigh-high, nearly obliterating the narrow path which ran slantingly in zigzag fashion to the top of the Pass, and gave opportunities of interesting glimpses up and down the treeless valley we were leaving far below us. A peculiar valley in many respects, made up of palisades and verdured plateaus rising suddenly from an even table-land and stretching away to distant mountain ranges. This spot, in its grandeur of formation and with all of its impressive solitude, seemed like the abode of gods in its vast simplicity.

From the top, where we rested, there was what is generally called a "beautiful," because extensive, "view." Personally I don't like panoramas—a feeling, I believe, shared by painters at large, who believe that a thing must not of necessity be "magnificent," so long only as it is vast in proportions. At any rate, far below us was this large plain, with its paraphernalia of fields and groves and lakes and villages and—just extensive, like other "views," so that you could spend hours, if you felt inclined, to study—geography. Out of it rose Fuji, hiding her head in clouds, as if she too was tired of this same perpetual "view," and tried to get a few hours' peace.

The only real interest I had in it was when our voluble guide pointed out Gotemba—a collection of minute specks lying beside a long sinuous thread—the railway—and I sadly reflected on the probable time it would take us to get there.

Gotemba. I had climbed and come down all this way "to do" Fuji. At Hakone all was foreground, with very little of Fuji; here it was all Fuji. To be truthful, I had the choice of two "foregrounds." I could take the sprawl-

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The Ameya—a Curious Crowd.

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ing railway station with its cow-shed architecture, blinking in the simplicity of unpainted wood, and the trains and bustling crowd. Then there was a wide, beautifully long and dusty road, steering with mathematical precision toward the mountain, without a tree or house to hide its gaunt nakedness.

The little tea-house where we put up was packed with pilgrims, who instead of "tramping it" come to Gotemba by rail, the better prepared for a two or three days' climb, and are continually straggling up this street on their way to the first or lowest station of the route to Fuji's top. As I squatted on the mats, munching some sandwiches which Peter had collected from the *débris* of our Hakone luncheons on the Pass, and which were supplemented only by a bottle of beer and a few eggs from the very restricted larder of the tea-house, I could hear a hilarious party of them in the room adjoining. A more intimate knowledge of whom it consisted was occasioned by the sudden blowing down of the flimsy paper doors, which the wind had lifted out of the shallow grooves dividing the rooms, and led to an unlooked-for and informal introduction. A confusing jumble of sprawling, noisy humanity in all stages of nudity, among the remains of a junketing sprinkled about in dishes, trays, and cups, with a large and varied collection of scattered clothes, bundles, and pilgrimage trappings generally, littered the floor so startlingly discovered. The merry company had doffed its everyday clothes, and was now preparing to don pilgrim gear, which ranged from freshest and spotless white in the hands of the youngest novice member to the dingiest of travel-stained and much bestencilled garments of the veterans. They hailed from Tokyo and were banded together in the Cloth Workers Guild, making its annual tour of Fuji, dissipating for the time its dignity, and enjoying, with the zest of schoolboys, the relaxation of a protracted holiday. I understood that this was the starting-point; and while the trip was planned to last but a short time, it was apparent that such a sketchy pilgrimage might be conducive to a vigorous treatment sadly lacking in those elaborated performances which take the patient and footsore devotee through many a province and cover hundreds of miles of irksome wandering.

It was useless to remain in a place so devoid of all picturesqueness, and not caring to waste more time just then in looking about on the slight chance of discovering something better, I decided to give it up for this once and return to Tokyo. The thoughtful little hostess put us up for the night in an outlying building, where, as she said, we might rest more peacefully and undisturbed by her pilgrim guests. The sun was sifting through innumerable knot-holes in the amado, making dull bars across the room and spotting the opposite wall with golden scintillating dots, when I awoke the next morning. After the breakfast of tea and a handful of small wafers—which as a sample would have been none the less acceptable had there been any more obtainable, we leisurely made ready for the early train. Then came a long, hot, and dusty ride to Yokohama. Toward evening Peter turned me over into the hands of a highly delighted and mildly excited personnel at the hotel in Tokyo.

As a result of the baneful cablegram which had jogged my memory with the ungovernable desire on the part of the publishers to see some of my drawings, I was now very busy and hard at work. With legs well up and extended straight before me, and arms well braced for action, I was just beginning to be deeply interested in the work in hand when there came a rap on the door. I have always had a callow dislike to be interrupted in the midst of my labors. So I muttered curtly enough—Come! Come in!!

The opening door revealed the slight figure of Peter, his face beaming with satisfaction: "Have got! I find house at rast! Smarr house—rarge garden, rike you say."

And then he went on to tell me how he had called on a relative of his, who casually remarked that a house in the vicinity had been vacant for the last two weeks or so and might be perhaps what Katsushika San was in quest of.

"Well," I said at this point, "didn't you say that you would speak to your

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The Geisha.

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friends over a month ago, and that as soon as they heard of anything they were to let you know?"

"Oh, yes, of course I say," replies Peter, "but you see I don' go tirr this afternoon to find out if she found anything yet, you see."

Mendicant Priest.

I do see, in fact I have been fast learning to see that Japanese clear-sightedness is sadly coupled with a rather tiresome lack of farsightedness, a little aggravating at times when the simplest things were only got at by most devious and roundabout ways.

Peter had gone to look at the house this reticent uncle of his had located, and had also interviewed the owner thereof, explaining to him the desire on the part of a friend, a foreigner, to rent a Japanese house.

"And" added Peter, "I'm thinking you wirr rike. I'm sure this time *just* what you want," with an emphasis on the just, the Japanese emphasis that is, of a guttural sputtering of the word. "If not so busy now, you can rook and see, the randrord waiting in house now."

It *was* a small house. The whole of it would have fitted in snugly into my studio at home. The garden, or at least the open space that would have been the garden had there been anything in the way of plant or shrub, was through its very abortiveness promising of adaptability to my needs, the very place for out-door posing of models. That and the convenience of the locality determined me to take it for a month or two till something better should turn up.

While I am poking about the place, Peter is negotiating with the landlord on the veranda, a solemn man of inscrutable face and manner, who listens to Peter's explanations with serious unconcern. Why a foreigner should wish to live away from and outside of Tsŭkiji, the foreign concession, is a suspicious mystery to him and well worth minute investigation as to who and why and wherefore. He parries all of little Peter's blandishments with the chilling determination not to be inveigled out of his building. He is as persistent as we are obstinate.

Finally Peter turns to me: "She say can't rent for ress than one year. You see it is 'fraid to rent to foreigner because spoir the house."

Prompted by me he succeeds in reassuring the obdurate man on this point, and eventually to win him over

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to listen to my proposal of taking it for six months. If up to this time I had accused the old boy of a sad lack of humor it was dissipated when our assiduous interpreter again turned to tell me of a new device his fertile and active mind had evolved.

"The randrord say if you prease pay insurance."

"Great Scott! What else. Tell him that I only want to rent it, I don't care to own the house."

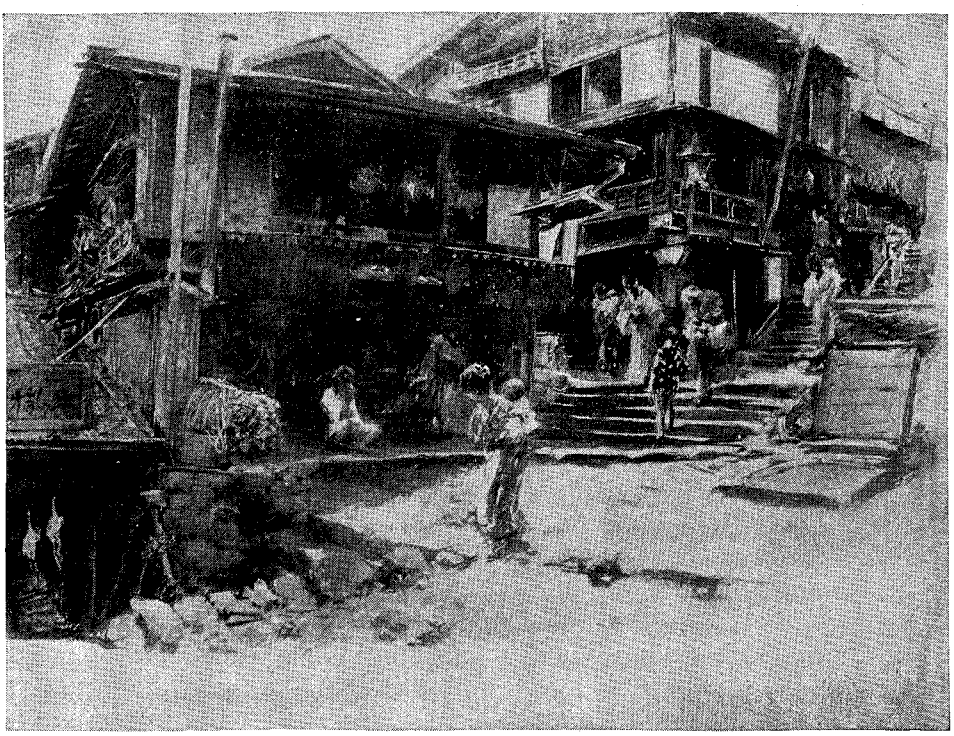
I am growing impatient and slightly fatigued. We are exactly where we were a full hour ago. The landlord squats with all the immovability of an image. Buddha could not have been more impassive.

There had already slipped by a month in this search for a convenient place; a quest that was fruitful only in experiences similar to the one narrated above. To have the affair off my mind I closed the bargain, and if I startled the old gentleman by my quick acceptance of his hard terms it was not shown by any outward signs. Nor was I quite easy in mind till I had hurried Peter away, lest a fresh outbreak wreck the whole proceeding.

"YURAKUCHO SANCHOME ICHI BANO.
"TOKYO, September 1, 1890.

"DEAR ———: I write you from my new home, into which I have had my traps brought from the hotel two days ago. . . .

"It is a little bit of an affair, having on the ground floor a largish room some ten feet square, two smaller rooms from it, and both together about as large as the big room; another small room and kitchen take up the rest of the space. Then in the second story there is one room with alcove; a veranda running around two sides of the house gives me plenty of sunlight. To give you a better idea here is a rough plan of the second story. I ought to tell you that the house is situated on 'Having pleasure' Street. It doesn't belie its name in so far as I have be-



Architecture of Ikao.

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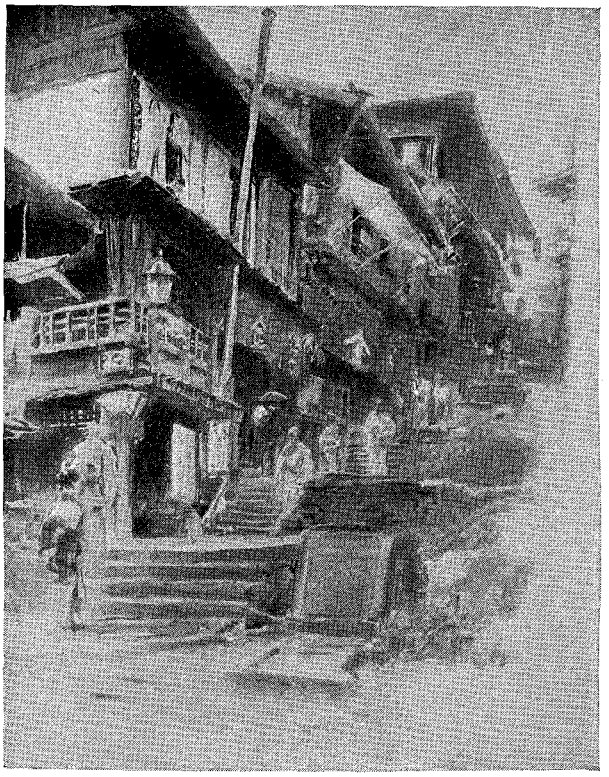
come an inhabitant, and since the house is at the very head of it—in fact the street runs into our very gate, where it ends—I see no reason why one shouldn't feel at the very pinnacle of happiness.

"How I should have managed without Katsushika's help I don't know, as it is owing entirely to his neat engineering that I am here at all. He has been a very important and busy man in the past two weeks. Between work, just as it is possible for me to get



The Terrace—Innumerable Stone Steps.

away, we have been going about collecting the few sticks of furniture necessary—having a bath-tub made, ordering futons, sleeping-quilts, etc. All of which interests me personally deeply enough, but can be of little importance to you who want impressions.

"Where shall I begin? I never know what to write about—if I think of something it at once suggests so many details to go into to give you any idea of it that I quail. Any little thing I see on the street will interest me very much but it is in the *seeing* it that gives insight and food for reflection. For instance, to-day in walking along the street I saw a little girl carrying her baby brother—strapped to her back in the usual way—not stoop to pick up a piece of string which he had dropped, but quietly slip her foot off her clog, seize it with the toes, steadying herself against a fence with her hands and bring it up with her foot to his outstretched hand. But unless you saw how the people generally and universally make use of their legs and feet in helping themselves in daily vocations this would prove of small interest to you. I have always the sensation of walking about on stilts somehow; not alone that the Japanese are a small race of people, but through the fact that everything is done far below me—near the ground. In walking along the street I can easily touch the eaves of the shops. The tailors, carpenters, the smiths, bakers, and umbrella-stick makers all squat at their work with legs and feet performing duty of an extra pair of strong arms. But after all, in cataloguing—for that is what this sort of thing would amount to—I don't give you anything. I mean the thing that it is to me—the light, life, spirit, charm, the something that hangs over it all like a gray sky over cherry-blossoms.

"Everything has been satisfactorily concluded, even to the permission from the Government necessary for living outside treaty limits, and which I obtained by the somewhat reprehensible subterfuge of figuring as a private teacher to Katsushika san. Don't ask me for any impressions just now of

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The Bath.

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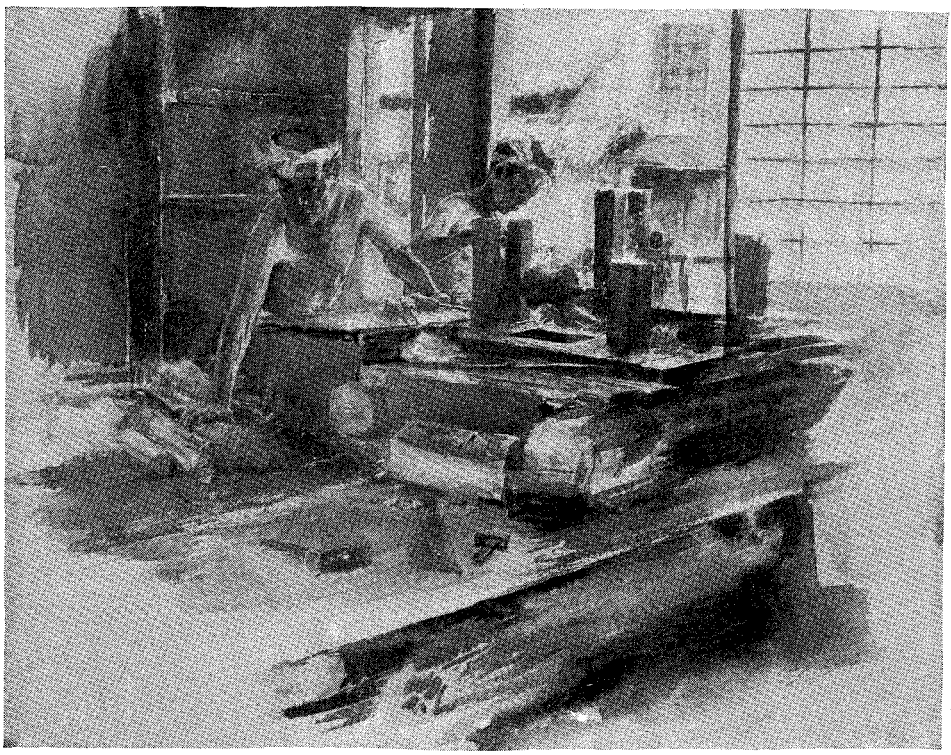

Japanese Workshop.

this sudden dropping into a new home life; it is all too much like having taken possession of a very large and emptied box of stationery—with all the glossy daintiness of so much paper, screens and doors and windows about. It feels just yet too much like playing at something else than real every-day life, and until this novelty has worn off, hardly worth the telling."

"September 24, '90.

". . . Well, my dear boy, the dust on my butterfly's wing hasn't been brushed off entirely, a matter after all resting on careful or clumsy handling, and since it is so easy for 'familiarity to breed contempt' I try to escape the odium of offensiveness by abstaining from too obtrusive an affability.

"The new household consists of—how shall I call *him* of perplexing attribute, friend, companion, guide, servant, or master? For he is any and all of these. Friend and companion because I so choose to treat him, the guide of my tongue-tied existence. In the rôle of servant he does more than would the most devoted of henchmen, and he assuredly *is* master, since in the awful eye of the law I am only regarded as his servant! Then there is O Ei san, the Honorable Miss Wealth, who is as small as the word but a mine of humble worth, as her name implies, making glad the house with her gentleness and happy disposition. And lastly the snub-tailed kitten that I have dubbed Shiro Kuro, Little Black and White, and who could just be swung around in the largest room by the aforesaid sketchy appendage without too much danger to any party attempting it. I saw her only a short while ago in the garden, busy at her daily vocation, that of catching dragon-flies—the garden, by the by, somewhat improved in appearance since I first came here, goes clambering up the embankment of the ancient moat which enclosed in feudal times the sacred precincts of the Im-

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perial castle. Drop in some evening and sit up there with me where we can see the sleeping water holding to its bosom the vast wealth of pale-faced lotos and shrinking water-lilies; and watch the flitting to and fro of lanterns on the opposite side, that seem like fireflies in the gathering dusk. In the very heart of a large city, that numbers more houses than New York, you shall have the pulse and throb of a night in the country. The rustling in the leaves of trees over head, the ceaseless sibilation of an insect world, and only faintly broken into, now and then, by the sound of some samisen—more weirdly accompanied by the voice of the player; you shall wonderingly realize by a small cluster of lights that you are but a stone's throw or two from the 'Ginza,' the Broadway of Tokyo."

"October 13, '90.

". . . You ask, to tell you of my daily life. As you say, even the most unusual becomes commonplace through habit. I have stepped into this new existence as naturally as—say a fly finds its way into amber. . . . Let's try to give you a picture of my day's doings. If the background remain vague and blurred don't blame me, as I am thinking only of details pertaining to the central figure.

At Prayer, Nikko.

"Background, the darkened interior of a room in the second story of a little house in Tokyo. Like all Japanese rooms, it is quite bare. A Kakemono, a girl reading a love-letter on the wall, and a tansu (set of drawers) in one corner is all it contains in the way of ornament or furniture. The occupant, stretched out in the middle of the clean matted floor on two futons of dingy blue stuff with a third of salmon-pink silk forming the coverlet, is awakened by the entrance of the tiny maid bearing a tray holding a pot of tea and a few pieces of toast.

"It is 7.15 A.M. Ei san slips down on her knees, and after placing the tray conveniently near cowers with head touching the mats between hands respectfully for a moment. She then rises and goes out on the balcony, which is boarded up every night by thin sliding panels, and shoves these amado back. While I am at my breakfast Katsushĭka may make his appearance with one of the many pots of plants we have in the garden. After my bath—which by the way has occasioned some little irruption in domestic routine by my having it in the morning, contrary to the custom in

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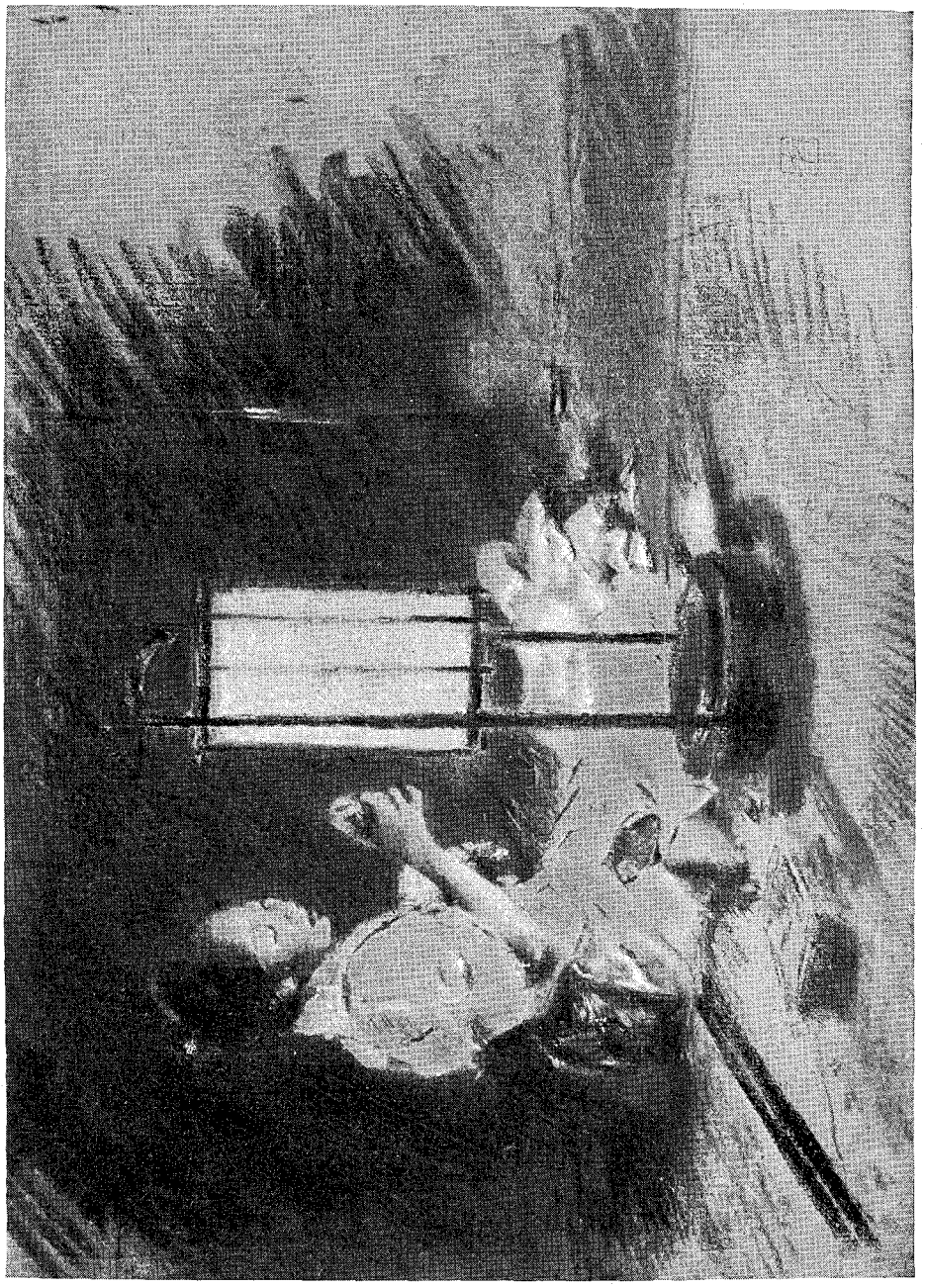

The Musmee—Night.

DRAWN BY ROBERT BLUM.

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Japan of taking it in the evening—I am ready to begin the day's work. If not from models posing in the garden, I go out, as I have been doing these past few days, to the temple grounds at Shiba, where six or eight Shōguns of the Tokugawa dynasty lie buried. In parenthesis I ought to add that I hate this working out of doors, as it means the drawing together of great crowds, who, though quiet and unobtrusive enough, make it very uncomfortable. I am used to a European crowd, that ebbs and flows about the easel; if anything it is invigorating compared to the breathless stagnation that characterizes the thing here. Am too hardened an old bird that has picked up its little crumbs in Italy, Spain, Holland, etc., to be frightened much by man so long as my tail-feathers are only half-way respected, but in the enormous throng even the invincible Katsushika becomes demoralized and powerless to extricate me at times.

"At 12 o'clock, or thereabouts, I turn my steps homeward for tiffin. If not too far away from the house I generally walk. The jinrikisha-men, who are always on the move, hail us with 'Danna san,' 'Master, will you condescend,' etc., or 'I am going your way and will take you cheaply,' or 'Honorably take me.' In the afternoon I am at work in the garden from a model, or engaged in the exciting chase after one, as I was to-day. Whether it is owing to the characteristic diffidence or a fine distrust of a safe escape from so venturesome a proceeding I don't know, but I spend weeks, even months, before I succeed by careful playing to land some of these slippery ones in my net.

"In the evening there is nothing to do or see. The streets after dark become silent. There is nothing going on in the way of amusement unless it be an occasional flower display in connection with a 'matsuri,' or temple fête. Even the 'Ginza,' with its modernized shop-fronts and ambitious electric lightings, drops quietly to sleep after a few hours of dull wakefulness. By half-past ten o'clock the last of the itinerant venders, who have thickly lined the curbs with things old and new, and ranging from the usefulness of a pair of clogs or strange-looking tools of trade to the purely ornamental articles in questionable lacquer, battered screens or dingy kakemono, have gathered their promiscuous belongings and shouldered them away in cloth-bound bundles or are drowsily trundling them along the deserted and unlighted streets, back again to their humble homes.

"As for me, I have long ago climbed to my little den, looking over my work, puzzling over matters pertaining to it, or reading, smoking, and dreaming—unless I write, as I have been doing to-night."

A rather unsettled autumn, in which we had had much rain and boisterous weather, was drawing to a close; the discomfort of which failed to disturb the equanimity of the Japanese mind, unless it was in the general but gentle murmuring at the havoc it had created in all the profuse festivities of chrysanthemum time. Then came bright, fresh days with clean-swept skies, and not a few that in the brisk balminess of air reminded me of our own mellow Indian summer. With hardly perceptible gradation the cold weather of winter set in; the high winds had abated, leaving the atmosphere still and clear. This was the "Shōkan" or "Little Cold," that, robbed of all the gloom so usual in America at this time of the year, brought us to the threshold of the new year.

This was the time of nocturnal "matsuri" at the Asakusa and Kanda temples, in befitting preparation for the celebration of New Year, so close at hand. The immense temple-grounds were crowded with booths in which everything in connection with the event or otherwise was sold. Booths bristling with toys or household utensils: those notably characteristic filled with brilliant displays of battledores highly ornamented with familiar figures from legendary lore, etc. (some of the more elaborate ones costing as much as six or seven dollars), symbolic decorations in plaited rush and twisted straw to hang before the portals during the festivities, plain or gilded little shrines,

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and strange-looking articles in metal, stands, bowls, lamps, tablets, etc., for household altars. The approaches to the temples were choked with old and young, nor was circulation much freer when the booth-crowded temple-courts were reached, and if to be in the thick of the wedging and surging mass was at times somewhat annoying, it was mitigated by the quiet and orderly conduct of the people. Here and there and everywhere over the heads of the crowds, stuck brooms and other household articles, toys held high out of harm's way, little tots with shaven crowns, perched on patient shoulders, looked about bewildered and confused with glistening feverish eyes.

"January 1, '91.

"DEAR ———: A New Year ushered in with pine camellia and plum-blossom. We have been busy for the last three or four days turning our streets into gardens in honor of the one big holiday we Japanese cherish above all others. With the confusing result of my wanderings about the streets to-day I can only hope, perhaps, to find in the impressions retained enough to give you a dim idea of it at least.

"Well, then—with the changing of the old way of reckoning time (whatever that might have been), when the Japanese New Year fell variously late in our January or in the first half of February—the adoption of the Gregorian calendar made the holiday, as with us, a fixture. In a sense it is the only holiday strictly observed; a day unique with its all-prevailing Sabbath atmosphere. But please don't think there was any of that dead solemnity so characteristic of our holidays at home! The gloomy impress that Puritanism has left on all days of rejoicing is wanting as yet, here where Buddha teaches. I liken it to a Sunday only because for once there was complete rest from toil—from humblest coolie to busiest clerk. The streets seemed empty and hushed, although there were many people abroad.

"Before the entrance of nearly every house, on either side, are tree decorations in various styles of arrangement. These consist principally of pine and bamboo fastened to a stake driven into the ground, and each object has a symbolic meaning. Thus the hardy pine should suggest a life that has withstood the storms and struggles of existence; while the bamboo, with its erect growth and succession of knots marking its yearly increase, makes of it a symbol betokening hale life and a fulness of years. Then there is a decoration complex with the numerous features of which it is composed. I can perhaps describe it best by saying that it is a fringe of rush, extending from side to side, over the door. Fastened to the centre of this fringed rope is an arrangement of several objects. The most conspicuous are a scarlet lobster and a species of the orange-like daidai—the former's curved body should hint at old age bent with the weight of years, the latter enacting a pun, as the word daidai also means 'generations'—thus intimating a wish for the family's posterity. These and one or two other things with various kinds of leaves, like those of the yusuri plant, which retains its old leaves while the young leaves are budding, and symbolizes the parents flourishing in the midst of children and grandchildren, and a fern-like plant which stands for conjugal life with its two leaves springing in pairs from the same stem—each and all have some peculiar signification.

"As I said, the streets seemed strangely deserted in spite of the life astir. To be sure, the bristling little shops were for the once closed, and the existence of so many shuttered fronts presented about as interesting an appearance as so many boxes of merchandise ready for shipment. Only here and there, at long intervals, a dingy blue or red sun-curtain fluttered, its white sprawling characters gayly spelling the name of some hospitable tea-house, or hid the half-opened front of a shop where squabbling boys crowded thickly to finger and select bedizened kites.

"Singing girls in bright colors, well-powdered and painted, with hair generously oiled, that caught large patches of blue from the clear sky overhead, flitted showily about, afoot or in jinrikisha, to pay their New Year's calls on

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friend, acquaintance, or patron. Vieing in color with these butterflies of fashion, were chattering swarms of children decked in their gayest best, and brilliantly spotting the more sombre mass of holiday makers. On all sides little groups briskly shuffled along, the sterner sex always well in advance, calmly unconcerned about the meekly following and waddling femininity behind. All were intent on performing the ceremonious visits of the day, glimpses of which in various stages of progression met the eye everywhere. I watched them slipping in one after the other by the doors—little wooden gratings so small as to necessitate doubling themselves up in the effort to squeeze through. I watched them behind this latticed door which screens the entrance, and saw the profusion of bows exchanged collectively between the visitors and the inhabitants of the house. And it would always be some little time before it was possible to adjust nicely the various forms of etiquette, and express satisfactorily to themselves 'the compliments of the season.' Nor was it a slight matter till they could finally be prevailed upon to slip their clogs and allow themselves to be ushered over the cleanly mats to the guest-room, where, if I am to credit what I have heard, more interesting and prescribed forms of social ceremonies take place. For if politeness with us is a mere virtue, here it becomes a necessity as vital to welfare almost as breathing itself.

"The day was also responsible for an unusual and variegated display of 'tiles,' and incongruities in the Japanese male attire offended the eye on all sides. I remember how, suddenly and quite unprepared, I encountered an old boy in full dress, including a very prominent pair of uneasy cotton gloves, the two buttons of the coat thoughtfully buttoned. Grotesque as was the effect produced by the wrinkled and ill-fitting clothes, it was, however, the 'tile' that caused my nerves to tingle and threatened to wreck self-control. The hat was old-fashioned; the curves of its brim had, through the long repose on the shelf, settled into ungainly lines decidedly brow-beating in character. It looked doggedly disreputable; brushed the wrong way, its glossy pride had succumbed to the persistent insults and had resigned in favor of the fuzzy tangle that now filled its place. For all that, there was about it such a reliant, perky air, such an air of superiority in holding itself aloof, as it were, from the meekly head it was entrusted to cover and protect, that I couldn't but be affected by the predicament I fancied it felt, and turned my head quickly to spare the old gentleman any humiliating thoughts such a weakness might have caused. As he placidly walked along, unprovocative of even passing curiosity, I couldn't help reflecting on what slight differences in points of view the sense of humor hinges. My imagination would somehow insist on placing him as he was on Broadway, and judging him from *that* and the probable effect.

"Did I say that all had ceased from work? Well, no! for in an open space where the sun shone warmly, sat the story-teller, who though glib of tongue and untiring in effort, failed to-day to hold the few that drifted near, or passing, stood for a moment only, to turn briskly away in cold indifference—the very ones who will again on the morrow gather for hours, patient slaves to thriftly handled words that bring the story to exciting climaxes, with as sudden a loss of interest on the part of the wily narrator, until a sufficient number of tempo and rin have jingled on the mat to encourage him to continue amid the general relief, that the 'heroine was safe once more from the villain that pursued her.' Too occupied were all with duties of the day; nor did the one solitary Ameya, sitting listlessly behind his gaudily bedecked stand, fare any better with the smaller fry, so absorbed were these in battledore and shuttlecock contests, or blindly oblivious to all else save the humming white squares of paper high amid air—kites—without which New Year would be as incomplete to them as Fourth of July without firecrackers at home."

The New Year celebration continued for the greater part of a week, and it

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was only after the processions of the various guilds, corporations, and merchants with appropriate displays on beribboned and decorated trucks, and the equally boisterously conducted "going out" fire-brigades* had concluded, that the fevered life subsided sufficiently to allow Tokyo to sink back again into its quiet and uneventful channels of every-day existence.

Spring followed closely on the lagging steps of an idly spent winter, and burst suddenly into dazzling beauty. The last days of March, "Sakurazuki," the month when cherry-blossoms are in bloom, had literally overwhelmed us with the glory and fragrance of their delicate pink magnificence.

Interesting as perhaps it might be to describe the exodus which almost depopulates Tokyo, so vast is the number that throng to Uyeno, Shiba, Mukojima, and other suburbs, so great and genuine is the appreciation of flowers, that the visit to "Sakuragari ni yuku," or viewing of cherry-blossoms, becomes an event of national holiday making.

But I have already greatly overdrawn the space allotted me, and it necessitates a brief summing up of impressions gathered on a trip, in company with some good friends, to Nikko and Ikao.

The outing, evolved spontaneously and with no definite place or time, was occasioned by my contemplated return to America. As the little note from the warm-hearted wife of the doctor tersely put it, it was to be a "hurrah, boys," rallying for a picnic that was to include in its arrangement, besides the elaborate details of a culinary department presided over by the cooksans, an equally profuse collection of shawl-strapped easels, umbrellas, and stools, and an obtrusive array of battle-scarred sketching outfits.

Just how and when we started, and what transpired on the way, and until we found ourselves safely installed in two houses vacated temporarily for us by the priests at Nikko, will have to be left unsaid, limited as I am to the merest outline of all that interests me here.

The village itself consists of a long straggling street starting from the railway station, which ends at the river, on the other side of which, screened from view by monumental trees, are the famous temples. Two bridges cross this turbulent stream; one, of red lacquer, closed and sacred to the use of only the Mikado's Court; the other, an humble every-day bridge, carries the road to the tombs. The magnificent mausoleums of the two illustrious Shoguns, Iyeyasu and Iemitsu, nestling in the cool heart of thickly verdured mountains, glisten forth from the surrounding sombreness in a way to dream about long afterward. Resplendent in gold and white and delicate color, they touch one with their refined beauty with a feeling akin to that 'catch-breathy' sensation on hearing fine music. In the absolute silence and isolation from all disturbing elements, the place thrilled with color, seemed to fill space with a rich melody; so blended were the tones in the volume and harmony of notes, pure, strong, and free, that echoed with splendor the sun's enchanting touch.

How Rico would revel in all this gorgeousness! None but he could render the charm of the prismatic tints, the glint of sun on gold and bronze, the play of light and shade on opalescent pillars and boldly carved doors and screens; none better than he to know how to concentrate the glowing brilliancy of sunlight on this wealth of painted woodwork, by deftly contrasting the black tiling of the heavy roof and the rich dark-green foliage of the trees beyond.

How a Fortuny would penetrate below the surface and fascinate by his keen analysis of the glamour! None but a genius with a subtile magic like his own, to lay bare the very heart, and

*There are fifty to sixty of these brigades, each numbering forty to sixty men. Primitive hand-pumps are in the vast majority, although there are a few and very inefficient fire engines of Western manufacture used. On the occasion of their annual display, which happens on the 3d and 4th of January, the men rally at their respective stations, and forming in procession, carry their new standards and insignia—"matoi"—(large affairs picturesquely constructed of heavy white paper), and dragging pumps, ladders, lanterns, etc., through the streets. At intervals they pause, and while some steady with their long fire-hooks the uplifted ladder, an agile member or two of the band nimbly mount and perform gymnastics at the top; this performance concluded they slide to the ground and the march is continued, all of them without intercession yelling joyously at the top of their voices. The various brigades make their way in this fashion to a large, open space in Uyeno Park, where a final review is held.

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make real and living that mysterious oriental spirit brooding about the spot.

The art of wood-carving must have reached the zenith, decorative art its freest expression, to accomplish this magnificent result; the finest temples in the whole land.

I refer especially to those of Iyeyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa regime, which are infinitely more refined in character and charm than those of his grandson Iemitsu, which in workmanship is of an excellence not much above that of the dingy Shiba temples where the remaining Shoguns of the Tokugawa dynasty lie buried.

Indeed, it is in the exquisite beauty of the sculptured, painted, and gilded woodwork that the extraordinary charm principally lies; had architecture kept equal pace, the result might have furnished the world with a monument of high worth. As it is, the embellishments preponder over constructive ability, and one sadly reflects here, more than anywhere else, how small in great, and how great in small, things the Japanese really are.

Humble little Ikao, on the other hand, with its "rag and tag" picturesqueness, was the extreme opposite of proud Nikko's * imposing and unapproachable aristocracy of magnificence; was so very appealing in its familiar, every-day worldliness, that we all fell in love with it at once. A lively enthusiasm that was demonstrated by the fervor with which sketching traps were unstrapped and easels and stools planted in its streets.

*Nikko means also "sunny splendor." Japanese proverb: Do not use the term beautiful (magnificent) until you have seen Nikko.

Built on the steep face of the mountain, Ikao goes climbing up by the aid of innumerable stone steps that form unique-looking streets, offering rare opportunities for the temperament in search of out-of-the-common aspects. In the ladder-like streets and the sky-raking quality of its storied houses, the town affords a decidedly novel contrast to other Japanese villages, where, as a whole, picturesqueness restricts itself so much to individual and isolated "bits."

Lying quite aside as it does from comfort-loving tourist traffic, its somewhat tedious inaccessibility has preserved in the inhabitants an old-time charm of manners and character unexpectedly new and pleasant, in the difference that marked the demoralizing intercourse in towns accustomed to foreigners.

Just how long we might have stayed it would be impossible to say, but at the end of the week a severe storm set in; the rainy season was at hand, with its weeks and weeks of gloom and rain in store. As it was, there came a four days' imprisonment at the chilly inn before communication with the lower world was opened, and although still raining, we took advantage of the comparative lull to make our escape. The roads had all been washed away or made impassable, and a tiresome enough ride, with kago and chair, it was that took our bedraggled little party by roundabout ways down to the railway at Idzutzu, six hours distance.

A month later I stood watching from the steamer's deck the land fade like a dream into the golden haze between the glowing sky and the evening waters below.

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THE TROUBLE IN THE BRIC-A-BRAC MISSION.

By William Henry Bishop.

THE reasons why the Stanwick family were away from their abode, in the majestic Chimborazo Apartment House, that mild afternoon in early spring, were somewhat as follows: Mr. Stanwick was, of course, at his business in the Produce Exchange. Mrs. Stanwick had gone out with her second daughter, Grace, to pay a round of visits. The youngest daughter, Elizabeth, had gone to take a walk with her most intimate friend; they were pedestrianizing just at present, and their walk extended far up Madison Avenue. The son, Barnford, home for the holidays from his military school, the Pipeclay Cadets, had gone up to the Polo Ground to see a baseball match.

The eldest daughter, Victoria, had gone to confer with the Eugene Wickerlys concerning a painful occurrence that had happened to herself that morning. This was the only absence having really a momentous cause: in the painful occurrence referred to was bound up the fortune of an enterprise they in common had very much at heart.

Even the housemaid, Nora, had somehow got an afternoon off. There was no one left in the house but Johanna Keeley, the cook. Being left in sole charge, with special injunctions to fidelity, it might have been supposed that Johanna would have guarded her employer's interests with much attention. Instead of that, hardly was the coast clear when she herself sallied forth. Sarah, the girl in the opposite flat, was sweeping the hall.

"You'll kindly mind our bell while I'm out, won't you, Sarah, and give me any kyards that does be left?" she said.

"I wull," assented Sarah. "We hears your bell in our flat mostly every time it rings, the same as youz hear ours."

"It's a great favor you'll do me."

"It's no more than we ought, betune neighbors. Maybe I'll be askin' the same thing meself, one o' those days."

"Me young nevya, Johnny, 's come home, and I got but wan chance yet to go over and pass the time o' day with him," the cook explained, adjusting a stiff, dull-hued, imitation India shawl, and hitching forward a very brightly florid bonnet a little further over her brow.

"Aw, it's young Johnny's come home, is it? Where is he stoppin'?"

"Over at Doolan's big corner liquor-store, on the First Avenue. Wan o' them Doolans was first cousin to the Colligans. You heard tell o' the Colligans?"

"I disremimber is it the Colligans or the Finnegans I heard tell of."

"They kep' a large coachyard in Lower Liffey Street, Dublin. But, howsomever, Johnny 'll be goin' back the Sunda', and I must send a message wid him up to the whole bang o' them at the farrum."

"What farm is it, Mrs. Keeley?"

"It's a farrum that belonged to me husband's father, off up in the New Jar*see*. His brothers, Michael and Thomas, and the sisters, Ellen and Ann, are all living on it. They won't have the daycincy to layve it be sold or divided, and me, out at service, gittin' no part nor lot in it."

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"Will you be long gone?" asked Sarah.

"I'll not let the grass grow under me feet," replied Johanna, taking this as a reminder of haste. "Doolan's place is two mile o' ground out o' this, but I'll be back in an hour's time or the matter o' that. I musht take the Belt Line across and the Second Avenya kyar after, and I'll spake to the condooctors that they'd go quick."

"Look out none o' the family sees you," said the other, in playful warning, as the cook was off.

"I will that. If it was another time, maybe I wouldn't vinture it; for that new benivolint society that Miss Victoria is goin' to so much—the Broky-Brick Mission, I thinks they calls it—is near Doolan's place, almost over forninst it, indade. But I know she was there mostly all the mornin', and she never goes to it but the wance a day."

The painful episode of the eldest daughter of the family had in truth occurred there or thereabouts. Miss Victoria Stanwick was a comely young person, round, slender, and remarkably well made, to which she added the care to be beautifully dressed, generally, in a rather severe distinguished taste. But, furthermore, she was a young woman of conscience, with a capacity for earnest enthusiasms. The corners of her charming mouth, which remained a very kissable one all the same, turned prevailingly downward with a serious air, instead of upward in the smile of the coquette. She spread no wiles for men except such as she could not help. At least such was her intention, and if she had departed from it a little in the case of Hamilton Gregg, it was very difficult, at all events, to distinguish between undue use of feminine charm and what was legitimate persuasion permitted in a praiseworthy cause.

She was at present plunged heart and soul in the establishment of a new branch of the Bric-a-brac Mission, in an uptown district of New York, under the lead of the Eugene Wickerlys. I fancy the Eugene Wickerlys will be remembered, that couple who, with considerable money and an uneasy activity in search of occupation, have set more than one exceptional social enterprise on foot.

The object of the Bric-a-brac Mission was to place Doulton-ware pilgrim bottles, Capodimonte plates, majolica plaques, Limoges enamels, Flemish jugs, and in general artistic articles of highly correct and salutary form, in the homes of the benighted poor. Their ignorance on those subjects was something simply appalling. Victoria Stanwick would have liked to talk to you about it, as she had talked at one time to Hamilton Gregg. They did not pretend to give originals, of course, the present state of their funds would not permit of it; but all were properly studied after subtly elevating and refining models, of their best development respectively—the Middle Period, the Tertiary Period, or the Early Period, as the case might be. Now and then, however, in especially deserving cases, a real Dresden china cow or idol or shepherdess was given. An apostle spoon had been known to administer surprising pabulum to the aspiration for a higher life, and very heavy afflictions had been solaced and reposed by the support of a Chippendale fiddle-back chair.

Victoria Stanwick had brought over Hamilton Gregg as a convert to the Mission, in great form. He subscribed to everything, went often to the rooms, and gave as much time as he could spare from his employment in the bank to distributing the æsthetic seed that was to spring up in such incalculable civilizing of life and character. When the time came for the grand dramatic entertainment for the benefit of the Mission, he took the principal part in the comedy—it was discovered that he had a great talent in that line—and he was also made stage-manager. Yet more, he was confidently counted on to bring in the aid of the morose Scadwin and his string quartette. The thing was almost settled. With the special attraction of Scadwin's lovely quartette, which hardly ever played for anybody, added to all the rest, there would be an entertainment certain to be memorable in the annals of such affairs, and, above all, certain to fill up the coffers of the society.

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All was going on beautifully, and the date of the great dramatic entertainment was but a week ahead, when suddenly, at the rooms of the Mission, Hamilton Gregg set forth the most shameless pretensions. These were nothing less than that Victoria should marry him, as a condition to his going ahead with any of the weighty features of the enterprise he had taken upon himself. She refused. You may see her painful embarrassment from here, but refuse she did, as she felt in duty bound.

"Oh, I am well repaid for my egregious folly! Oh, I suffer dearly for my senseless infatuation!" cried Hamilton Gregg, upon this, flying into a prodigious rage.

"You are not very complimentary. I do not see what price you have paid, nor to what you considered yourself entitled," she responded, proudly. "I took a warm interest in your—in having you see this matter, the Mission, in a way which would be an advantage to you as well as to others—that is all. But I do not want to marry you."

"You are utterly inconsistent," he exclaimed. "Does this accord with your confidential treatment of me? the many exceptional marks of favor you have shown me? Was I a person likely to make such a mistake?"

"Women do not have to be consistent," she said, in a curt way, for she was beginning to grow impatient under his wearisome persistency.

It cannot be said that the revelation had taken her entirely by surprise; she had dreaded something of the kind for quite a while, but only hoped that the evil day might be put off till after the eventful affair that was coming. But now that the crisis was fairly upon her and could not be escaped, when the sweet postponements and diplomatic delays of which she had availed herself were of no further use, there was a certain relief in the frank explanation. She had feared of late that her poor, perishable, human attractiveness had some share in leading him on to the things of the higher æsthetic life and to a philanthropic regeneration.

"Even if so," she argued mentally, "ought I not simply to be grateful to have been found worthy to serve as a humble handmaid of Art? And should he feel any mere trifling temporal disappointment or uneasiness connected with the matter, ought I, having done him so great a service in the widening and ennobling of his nature, really to concern myself about it?"

She had even gone so far as to say that she would never marry any man who would not, the opportunity being open, join such a commendable work as the Bric-a-brac Mission. Gregg had joined it at once, and seemed to consider this as a sort of promise personal to himself.

In spite of her attempted self-justification, her conscience pricked her, and she was glad to tell him openly, before he had completed the services on which he now set such an exaggerated price, that she could by no means be his. At the same time she secretly hoped that he would not maintain any such preposterous exactions.

"You confound two questions in which I cannot see the least possible connection," she said to him. "What difference could my marrying you make as to your duty to benefit yourself and the world, by aiding the Bric-a-brac Mission?"

"What is the good of it, anyway?" he asked, irrelevantly. "If you want to help any of those people, why don't you give them a square meal or a suit of clothes, instead?"

"You don't believe in it? You doubt the inestimable value of the Bric-a-brac Mission?" she cried, shocked. "Have I got to go all over it again? How many times have I told you that there are too many soup-kitchens, 'refuges,' coal, and clothing supplies, and all that sort of thing? In these days we've got to find some kind of charity that doesn't cause more demoralization than good. The social classes don't owe to each other as much as used ignorantly to be thought. If you don't want to have flies, don't leave the things around that breed them. You haven't any right to discourage honest industry and increase indolence and improvidence by indiscriminate alms-giving. This is the latest scientific information. Now *we* have found something differ-

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ent. Of course, I can't explain it all to you clearly. Mr. Eugene Wickerly, if you would only see him——"

"Am I the kind of a person to be contented with 'the latest scientific information,' with a cold æsthetic ideal, when you were always there before my eyes, lovely, radiant, enchanting? Look at me! I am wasting away to a shadow. You are never out of my mind, day or night. My friends don't know what to make of it; they think me half mad. Now, look here, only marry me and I'll do anything under the sun to please you, no matter what. We'll carry on bric-a-brac missions together. We'll send out electric lights and casts from the Parthenon to the natives of Timbuctoo, if you like, or subscriptions to the magazines to the Grand Lama of Thibet."

She was softened a little by the vigor of his compliments, but hardened again by the imprudence of this unregenerate scoffing.

"I am very sorry, but it can't be done," she said, demurely.

"Then let this wretched mockery cease. Here I stop short; here I stand firm. Understand it well: I will have nothing further to do with any of these matters that are going on. No more rehearsals, no more stage-managing for me. You must look out for somebody else to take my place. I wash my hands of the dramatic entertainment and the society in every way, shape, and form."

He had expected that this, his ultimatum, would be formidable, and it was. She was quite crushed by the blow.

"Oh, Hamilton! I mean, oh, Mr. Gregg!" she murmured, "this is dreadful, dreadful."

Perhaps there are dramatic entertainments that can spare the leading character from their comedy just at the last moment; perhaps there are others that can spare their stage manager; but to have them both swept away at one fell swoop, almost in the face of the audience—and that, too, with dread of more defections coming—how expect that such a calamity could ever be survived?

"And the Bric-a-brac Mission is so sadly in need of every new recruit, of every grain of encouragement and influence," she added, piteously.

"The Bric-a-brac Mission be hanged!" he replied, with savage emphasis.

"But you will at least see that we have Scadwin? You are the only friend of his who can persuade him. You'll see that we have Scadwin's quartette, all the same, won't you?" she suggested, timidly.

He gave a sort of indignant snort. "Not if I know it. Not if I can help it," he said.

"Oh, this is dreadful, dreadful," she murmured anew.

"I shall return everything that belongs to you, and try to forget that you ever existed," he went on, with increasing fury. "I shall send back your letters——"

"You may keep them, if you like," she interposed, in mild parenthesis; "I am sure there is nothing in them," which was indeed truthful enough.

"I shall send back your photograph, which has blessed my eyes, like the shrine of the holiest altar. By the first mail, too, you will receive my rôle copied out from that wretched comedy. Give it now to some other poor dupe. Comedy, indeed? ha! ha! what tragedy could half express what I feel?"

Victoria could only bow her head under the storm. They parted in silence, but a few blocks away from the new branch rooms of the Mission.

Such was the interview. In the afternoon the agitated Victoria, hastening to the Wickerlys to see what could be done about staving off the disastrous consequences from the Mission, did not find the wise Mentor, Eugene, at home. She found only Mrs. Eugene. Yet this was perhaps better, for it was a delicate affair, about which she felt she could talk to Mrs. Wickerly alone with the greater freedom.

"An' how is young Johnny?" queried Sarah of Johanna, the cook, on the latter's return to the Chimborazo Flat.

"Bright and brishk. Was anny wan here for me since?"

Sarah handed out the cards of a couple of ladies who had called.

"Rayde me the names on them, Sarah, me jewel."

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The other did so.

"That's a sort we don't have a great lot to do with, them two. They'll not show their faces in another six months or a year, and there'll be no betrayment be them."

"You met with nothin' disquietin' to you when you were out, Mrs. Keeley?"

"Faix I had wan close call, that gev me a bit of a fright; howsomdever it didn't signify."

"What was it, Johanna?"

"I told you already how the rooms o' that Bricky-broke Mission was near Doolan's place over forninst. Doolan's custhomers do say that the singin' and discoursin' be that bad out o' the windys of it sometimes, that they'd be near callin' the police. Well, me dear, what wid bein' in such haste when I left Doolan's, sure I quite forgot to mind me eye about that place and go round the corner. I was passin' by it, when a young felly comes down the steps, wan that I did see here by times, callin' afther Miss Victoria. He had a long-lookin', solemn face on him, and a kind of a packet in his hand. 'You are the cook at Misther Stanwick's, are you not?' says he. I was struck that spacheless that I cudn't say a word. 'Give this, wid me complemints, to Miss Victoria,' says he, handin' his packet out at me. I put me two hands behind me back, for you'll aisy see I cudn't take errands on a trip o' that kind. 'Well, you are a servant at Misther Stanwick's, are you not?' says he again. 'I *am* not,' says I, very brazen, 'nor ever was.' Wid that he layves me alone, and I goes off, thrustin' me tongue in me cheek, at the moony, wandtherin' shtyle of him. Me on'y chance was to deny it."

"I was near forgettin' that the postman was here too, with a letter," said Sarah, as the stout cook, with bonnet-strings already loosened, was entering at her own door.

"A letther? and where is it?"

"He wouldn't leave it to me. It was one o' them registered letters, that has to get a recayte signed for it in a book. He rung yeer bell twicet and was grumblin' and growlin' that there was no one to answer him."

"O—a, my! a letther! that's bad; may be they'd hear o' that. Why didn't you get it off him, Sarah dear?"

"Sure I coaxed him hard to give it to me. I know he'll bring it back. 'I wouldn't give it to you if you was twenty times as mealy-mouthed,' he says. 'Only them 'll get it as it belongs to,' and then off with him down the stairs—with the polite manners some of them postmen do have."

"Who does them registhered letthers mostly be for, Sarah?"

"For the masther. They has money and things o' great valya intirely in them."

When the Stanwick family returned Johanna made her report. The cards were treated with small consideration, as she had foreseen.

"How was Miss Crawbill dressed?" demanded the second daughter, Grace, disdainfully.

"She—she had a kind av a lighty dark shuit on her, wid a shtreaky stripey look," answered Johanna, hesitating a little at first, but then going ahead without a wink.

"Was there anything else?"

"There was a letther," Johanna confessed, for she was alarmed about this. She fancied there was danger of losing it, and that it might be necessary to go in search of it.

"And where is it?"

"It was one of them registhered letthers that does have money and things o' great valya in them, and he wouldn't layve it to me."

"How annoying!" was the general exclamation.

"The worst of it is," added buxom Mrs. Stanwick, "that when they take a letter away like that, they are not always in a great hurry to bring it back again. It may not come by this evening's delivery, and perhaps not even by the first one in the morning. Couldn't you have managed to get it from him, Johanna?"

"I shtruggled hard wid him. 'You know me character,' I says. 'I cud give you rufferincis to the highest in the land,' I says to him. He shwore he'd giv it to none but them it was comin' to, afther they'd sign for it in a lyer's book. 'Do you think I'd shteal

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it?' I asks him. 'That's nayther here nor there; ye'll not have it,' says he."

"Oh, Johanna," said young Elizabeth, casually, "I thought I saw you in a Belt Line car, on Fifty-ninth Street, as we were going up Madison Avenue. Were you out? I fancied I should know that bonnet of yours anywhere. It ought to be looked at through smoked glass, though."

"Is it me?" her ruddy cheek taking a flush several degrees deeper, "wid all I had to do in me kitchen?" Then, in greater indignation, "the wan that made me that bonnet has made the same patthern since for the half o' New York. I'll give her a piece o' me mind yet."

"Never mind Lizzie; she likes to tease," said the mother of the household. "But whom was the letter for? The postman at least told you that."

"He did," responded Johanna. She was spurred on by the dangerous touch of suspicion she had just escaped, to give her position all the veri-similitude possible. She embroidered her narrative with details that in a less flustered mood she herself might have seen to be needless. "'For the masther, and it's of great valya entirely,' he says, 'and I got me ordthers to howld it fasht till I see him.' And what's more, didn't I see the name av Stanwick—Hirum B. Stanwick, Exquare—in the big writin' on the envelliyope, forninst me eyes?"

"Do you know I sometimes think you don't read writing very well, Johanna," said Victoria, regarding her gravely.

"O—a, then, do you mind that, now?" raising her arms in a protesting way. "Isn't it me that does be givin' yez yeer letthers, every wan the right letther that's comin' to him, whin Nora's out and it's me turn to open the doore?"

It is true that she did this, but the times when it was demanded were very rare, and the *tour de force* was performed by the aid of the postman. She made it a point of pride to get the letters placed in her hand by him, for delivery, in a certain order, not likely to be easily disarranged. In other ways, too, she took infinite pains to keep up the illusion, though this ambition had never induced her to make the effort to learn a single character, either of script or print.

The idea of the mysterious registered letter began to ferment in the imaginations of all, and to give rise to a great variety of speculations.

"*You* don't expect any money letters or anything of that kind here, do you, papa?" asked Grace. "They would go to your office. Much more likely to be the present Uncle Jordan was going to send me, about Easter-time, for a new dress." Without stopping for an answer, she hurried to a rich-red cherry-wood desk, took out a piece of correspondence, came back, and showed it to Johanna as a specimen. "There, wasn't the handwriting something this way? Don't you think it was the same as this?" she asked.

"It was pretty much that-a-way; sure it's very like," returned Johanna, with an amiable wish to please.

"But she says the man said it was for papa," objected Victoria.

"He might have sent it in papa's name."

"It may be Flamson that's paid up at last," suggested Mr. Stanwick to his wife. "It would be like him to send it to the house instead of the office, to make more of an impression on the family."

A considerable loan had been made to Flamson on the score of personal friendship. There was really little prospect of getting it back, but Flamson was a very plausible person, and he had been promising anew of late.

"If Flamson *should* pay up, we'll have the house at Rye," said Mrs. Stanwick. "I have thought, too," meditatively, "it may be the interest on my toll-bridge stock, sent in a little earlier than usual."

"*I* think it's the belated dues from our Winter Night German, that are coming in to me as treasurer," put in Elizabeth, vivaciously. "There were three that Belle Mason promised to get for me before she went to Albany, and I guess she'll forward them from there. Wasn't it post-marked Albany, Johanna? and wasn't the writing all sloped this way"—drawing an imaginary copy in the air—"with a tremendous thick splash crossing all the t's?

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She writes an awfully large, bold hand, Belle does."

"Troth, I wouldn't wonder if it was. I belayve it was quite resimblin' to that," assented the domestic, raising her hand to her cheek in a dazed way.

"Let Johanna go back to her kitchen; we shall never have dinner to-night," interposed Mrs. Stanwick at this point, with authority.

Barnford, the school-boy son, drew his sister Elizabeth aside into the hall at the first opportunity, and said to her: "They're not onto it at all, Liz. I can give you the true inwardness of this thing in two minutes."

"*You* can?"

"It's like this. That letter is a report from old Grimson, the principal, about my conduct up at the Pipe-Clay Cadets, last term. I've been waiting for it. Things weren't altogether lovely up there. I just give you the tip, you know. They probably send the letters registered so as to keep 'em from falling into the fellows' hands."

"Bad boy! aren't you ashamed to tell me this?"

"Of course I am, but that isn't the proposition just now. What you and I have got to do, Liz, is to keep on the *qui vive* for that same letter when it comes back. We'll plunge out into the hall first, freeze onto it, one or the other of us, take it to the grate or a window, to notice who it's for, see? and then all of a sudden some accident will happen to it."

"Horrid boy!"

"I'll do as much for you some time, Liz."

Miss Victoria presently followed Johanna even to her kitchen, and addressed her in her sincere, earnest way.

"Tell me truthfully," said she, "are you sure it was not a package of about this general size and form?" exhibiting a roll which was about what the copied dramatic part of Hamilton Gregg would have looked like, if sent by mail. "And wasn't there more than one package, Johanna? Wasn't there one that resembled a tied-up bundle of letters? and then another, perhaps, that might have been a photograph — imperial size?"

"It's you, then, that's in the right of it, Miss Victorya, darlin'," cried the cook, beaming with benevolent brightness, and so anxious to stand well with all the world that she had quite forgotten her previous protestations. "Them was the very self-same, and they all covered over criss-cross wid big red sayles and poshty-stamps."

"Then what did you mean by saying the letter-carrier said it was for papa? How could it have been for papa?"

"That's what I axes mesilf too, Miss Victorya," responded the kitchen dame, flustered, yet not very much, at being brought up with this round turn.

It was evident that nothing conclusive could be got out of Johanna. The only thing certain was that there was a registered letter for *some* member of the family, and there was nothing to be done for it but to wait patiently till the postman should make his reappearance. Miss Victoria, and even various of the others, slept much less than common that night. In the long intervening watches each personage saw the probabilities in his own case with a more favorable eye, and strengthened himself in his theory. Mrs. Stanwick took time by the forelock, and wrote already to get further particulars about the house at Rye, to be bought with Flamson's money. Miss Grace took down some samples from which she should select her new dress with Uncle Jordan's remittance. Barnford and Elizabeth practised the drill they meant to use in their confiscation project. Miss Victoria, starting out immediately after dinner, spent a large part of the evening in driving round, to find another stage-manager and leading character for a comedy. She returned late, in darkly-deepening despair, success was all but impossible. And then, too, Scadwin's Quartette?

As a matter of course, because he was so eagerly expected, the postman had to be very much later than usual next morning. Mr. Stanwick delayed his going down town to receive him. While they were all waiting, there was a sharp nervous ring. A false alarm. It was Hamilton Gregg, exceedingly early, to be sure, for a visit. He caught sight of Victoria.

"I wanted to catch you before you

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went out," he gasped, "I have not come to demand again. I——"

She drew him into a little reception-room, at the left of the hall. His expression was to her most enigmatic. If he had sent back the rôle and other papers, as he had threatened, then this preamble and his severe look probably meant further reproaches, perhaps even menaces, an aggravated form of the painful scene. If he had not sent them back, perhaps he had relented. If she could only know, she should know how to take him.

He had got only so far as just to open his mouth, as one might say, without a word having yet issued from it, when the veritable postman's ring, accompanied by a shrill whistle, was heard. The door was thrown wide by Barnford, on the watch, and incredibly outstripping the speed of Nora. It proved to be not the regular man, but a carrier for special service.

But the clasp of his satchel provokingly stuck fast, and he could not get his letters out immediately. The persons waiting with attentive ear in the several rooms had time to grow impatient and sally forth. The whole family gathered round. Victoria watched from the sill of the reception-room, and Hamilton Gregg looked out from behind her. Nora hurried to the region of the kitchen for the chisel or other instrument, but came back without it. Johanna Keeley followed immediately after, wiping her arms upon her apron, and produced the chisel. She was retiring along the hall again, as lingeringly as possible, to give her curiosity some chance of gratification, when the postman, bursting open his satchel, roared in a stentorian voice, to make up for lost time.

"Mrs. Johanna Keeley!"

"What's wanted?" asked that personage, turning around.

He was waving a letter in the air.

"Registered letter, Mrs. Johanna Keeley! Anyone answer to that name? Quick now, lady, if it's you!"

"Is it for me? Go away wid you, or I'll hit you wid wan o' them umbrells," reaching vaguely toward the hat rack.

"Mrs. Johanna Keeley, that's plain enough, ain't it? Sign here, please," imperturbably.

Young Barnford, in a high state of glee at his own escape, was the first to grasp the situation. Hurrying forward, he signed the book for her.

Johanna looked at first as if she were going down under a stroke of apoplexy. "Here's some mishtake," she said, recovering herself with a portentous gravity. "Take it you, Sor. Howly powers, but it's makin' game o' me he is."

She handed it to Mr. Stanwick, who ran his eye hastily over it, reading aloud certain salient words. "It's from a lawyer. Deceased husband's estate. Brothers Michael and Thomas, and sisters Ellen and Ann. Take notice, et cetera, et cetera. A sale is ordered of some piece of property. It's for you, yourself, Johanna. Now, what the devil has been the meaning of all this nonsense?"

"And you *haven't* sent your part back, then?" said Victoria Stanwick, turning upon Hamilton Gregg with a highly assured manner and a welcome sense of relief. She knew now how to deal with him.

"Sent it back? not a bit of it. I was going to, you know; it nearly gives me a cold chill to think of it. No, no, I spoke in haste. I've come back to ask for pardon. Try me again. I only want——"

"They'll layve the farrum be sold! They'll layve the farrum over out in the New Jarsee be sold and divided! Now the blissin' o' the saints be on all them this day!" they heard Johanna exclaim, in momentary forgetfulness of her embarrassing position.

"Listen to me, I say, Johanna!" exclaimed Mrs. Stanwick, with indignantly swelling breast; "why did you invent all these imaginary conversations, this vast tissue of lies? And you," recapturing the letter-carrier with her gesture through a crack in the door, just as it was closing behind him, "a complaint ought to be lodged against you at the Post-office. What reason had you for not giving her her letter yesterday, when you were here, instead of coming back to create all this disturbance?"

"Complaint against me, mum! No, I

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guess not. I couldn't very well give it to her when there wasn't nobody in the house. I rang your bell-pull most off. Ask the gal over the way, if you don't believe me."

"You were out of the house, Johanna," exclaimed Elizabeth, coming and standing before her vivaciously, with youthful, accusing eyes. "Then I *did* see you in the Fifty-ninth Street car? I was sure of it."

The accused thought it the best policy to resist identification. She denied strenuously up and down.

"You'll remember meeting *me*, though," said Mr. Gregg, "over First Avenue way." He had stepped out into the scene of excitement with the rest. "I handed you a manuscript to bring, you recollect, and you didn't seem to be exactly on your way home just then."

Upon this Johanna finally collapsed, unable to hold out against such an overwhelming weight of testimony.

"You're that same long-lookin', glumpy-lookin' man," she muttered, sullenly; "well, Miss Victorya won't get much good wid *you*."

"Yes, I was on the very point of it, but thought better of it then and there," said Gregg, drawing back to Victoria's side to help cover her confusion. "I thought what a brute I'd been, and fully realized the enormity of what I was going to lose."

"And you still think better of it? You are going to be reasonable?"

"I've separated the two questions completely. Just you turn me to some use, that's all I ask. I'd rather have the little finger, as it were, of your friendship than the whole of any other woman's love."

Victoria found this rather neatly put. Since he no longer insisted upon anything, she was much more inclined to an amiable yielding. And in truth, in her conference with Mrs. Eugene Wickerly, that lady had thought that it might not be such a bad thing, if the worst came to the worst, to save the dramatic entertainment on Hamilton Gregg's own terms. She had shown him to be an excellent match, and had said a quantity of very nice things about him.

"Me nevya, young Johnny, over at Doolan's, and me not go and see him?" grumbled Johanna aloud, as she went back to her kitchen. "I suppose yeez 'ud have me neglict me own flesh and blood. That's the char'ty yeez have."

Luncheon that day was not a distinguished success, and dinner was a total wreck. Turkey legs came up sticking out from the midst of the blue-fish. Next morning Johanna left this excellent place in ignominy, somewhat consoled, however, no doubt, by her share of the inheritance in the New Jersey farm.

And, speaking of financial matters, the receipts from the dramatic entertainment for the Bric-a-brac Mission, with the kind assistance of Scadwin's Quartette, were nearly enough to put a Macramé lace lambrequin in every East Side tenement-house from Kip's Bay to the Harlem Flats.

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EGOTISM.

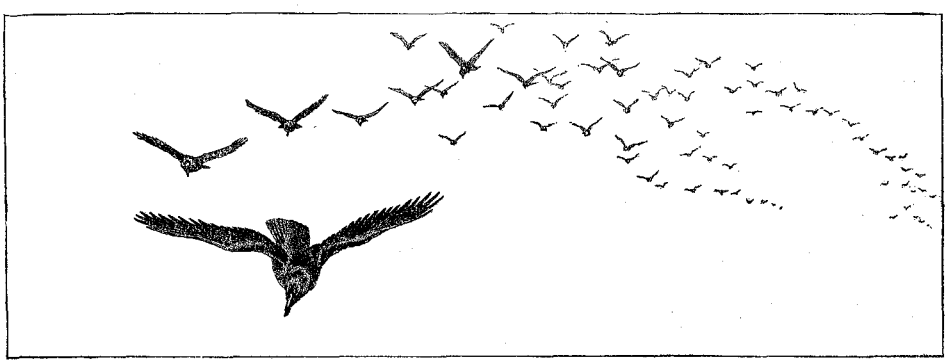
By E. S. Martin.

Without him still this whirling earth
  Might spin its course around the sun,
And death still dog the heels of birth,
  And life be lived, and duty done.

Without him let the rapt earth dree
  What doom its twin rotations earn;
Whither or whence, are naught to me,
  Save as his being they concern.

Comets may crash, or inner fire
  Burn out and leave an arid crust,
Or earth may lose Cohesion's tire,
  And melt to planetary dust.

It's naught to me if he's not here,
  I'll not lament, nor even sigh;
I shall not feel the jar, nor fear,
  For I am he, and he is I.



The Crow Army—Advance Guard, Column, and Rear.

THE BIRDS THAT WE SEE.

By Ernest E. Thompson.

Illustrations by the Author.

ON a bright morning in the month of May two friends went walking in the diversified region that forms the outer suburbs of one of our great Eastern cities. One was a trained naturalist, the other was not, and, in consequence of a trifling discussion, it was agreed to note carefully, during the rest of the morning, whatever birds each might observe, with a view to comparison at the end of their walk.

The naturalist saw over sixty different kinds, the other saw but seven. One saw something new at each fresh turn of the path, the other found but little of interest and nothing to keep his thoughts from wandering back to the usual daily worries that he had sal-

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lied forth expressly to escape. I think it is Ruskin who says, "Ten men can think for one that can speak, and ten men can speak for one that can see." Children have in perfection this wonderful power of seeing, and it is only by continued neglect and suppression, that, as we grow older, we succeed in depriving ourselves of this precious gift. Afterward, the power is regained only by hard study and continued practice, and the artist who sees colors, and the naturalist who sees living objects, have merely succeeded in recovering the perceptive powers of their childhood, with the addition of names for the things seen. They have succeeded also, in conferring on themselves one of the greatest and most elevating of pleasures, something whose delights, and even existence, are unknown to the class represented by that worn-out Roman debauchee who vainly offered a fortune for a new sensation.

The seven birds seen by the "blind man," shall I call him? were, the common black crow, the lawn-frequenting robin, the ubiquitous English sparrow, some swallows flitting about the barns, a woodpecker on an old apple tree, a singing thrush, and a hawk sailing high above the elms. But since each of the last four names represents several different birds, our untrained observer cannot claim to have definitely seen more than three. This, compared with sixty odd, is a poor showing, but these figures fairly represent the two extremes of the power to observe; and though a long training was necessary to perfect the equipment of our naturalist, it will be found that almost anyone may quickly acquire the skill to see and know at least twenty or twenty-five of the common birds that were observed that morning. Let us also go over the ground, trusting that if our observations do not quite allow us to claim sixty birds, we shall at least get beyond the seven of the inferior observer.

The common crow is a bird that few can mistake. Its great size, black color, and loud voice claim attention everywhere, while its high intelligence, and the almost military organization of its tribe, show a brain development unsurpassed in any of our birds.

The mere fact that so conspicuous a bird continues to dwell and multiply throughout our highly cultivated country, in spite of guns, traps, poisons, and unremitting, relentless persecution, is the highest possible proof of its fitness for the great struggle. The crow was originally a woodland bird, but has suited itself readily to the mixed country that Eastern America now affords, and is probably as numerous as ever.

In primitive days, when all Eastern America was a great forest, and all the central region a great plain, the distribution of birds was somewhat different from what it is now. For we know that the artificial destruction of forest, and extension of the open country toward the Atlantic, have resulted in the eastward spread of many prairie birds, such as the shorelark and the bobolink, and a corresponding retreat of such purely forest birds as the pileated and ivory-billed woodpeckers. But there are several which, like the crow, were originally forest birds, and yet have not in any sense retreated from their changed, ancestral domain, but are found to this day in every part of their former haunts which still retain a portion of their woodland shelter.

One of these, the blue jay, escaped altogether the observation of the "blind man," yet was quite as interesting to the naturalist as the semi-civilized and highly intelligent crow. He heard it that morning, long before seeing it; the loud cry of "*jay, jay*," announced its name to all the world, before the bright blue flash across the opening in the grove, showed just where this cousin of the crow was foraging.

In the days of the early pioneers the cries of the jay received more than passing notice, for they gave the hunters a general idea of what was astir in the woods, and whether it was owl, fox, lynx, or prowling Indian he could not escape the watchful blue jay, which failed not to publish the news for him that had ears to hear. Of course, it was not easy to tell from the jay's cry, precisely what foe had alarmed him, but the skilful hunter could often do so, and he learned, at least, to be on the alert whenever he heard the blue jay's warning.

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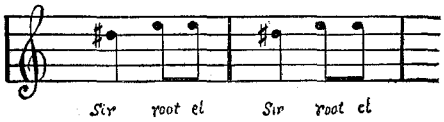
Blue Jay.

Very often it helped him in the pursuit of game, occasionally it did him essential service, though, perhaps, as often, he found himself betrayed by this ever busy marplot.

The ordinary note of the blue jay is the "*jay, jay,*" above described, but this sound is used in so many different ways and with such a variety of intonations that it answers for a score of expressions. When calling to his mate he utters a sort of song, suggesting the words "*sirrootel, sirrootel.*" It is a soft,

musical refrain, and seems not to come from the same throat as the louder "*jay, jay.*"

But his talent for mimicry is so great that it is impossible to catalogue all his notes, original and adopted. On one occasion, I had climbed to a blue jay's nest, without once seeing the owner. I did not hear even the usual harsh threatening, but I did hear, over my head, the loud screaming of the red-tailed hawk, and became aware that immediately over the tree, the screamer was sailing to and fro. At length, a nearer approach and a better view enabled me to discover that this screaming redtail was none other than the blue jay himself, trying to frighten me from his nest, by simulating the voice and action of a bird that he himself held in mortal dread.

In each of these instances the first sign of the bird's presence was its note, and in most cases it will be found that the ear, rather than the eye, was the guide of our naturalist. Before entering the low woods whence the blue jay came, there fell upon his ready ear a low, simple song like "*cheedle, cheedle, chickadee, dee, dee, dee,*" and again a little bird appeared, announcing his own name. Out of the evergreen covert he darted, chasing his merry companions or flitting about among the low thickets and scrambling along the branches, heels up, or head up, with equal indifference. This is the bright, pert, little chickadee, the commonest of the tomtits that live in the colder parts of the great forest, and the one of all others, that, *via* the nursery rhyme, is forcing his way upward into our serious literature.

"*Chickadee dee, chickadee dee,*" he sings again and again, as he clambers about close at hand, with a confidence that has won for him the friendship of the children everywhere. Not a boy in the rustic homes about but knows this merry note of the black-capped bird, yet scarcely one suspects that the

The Chickadee and his Song.

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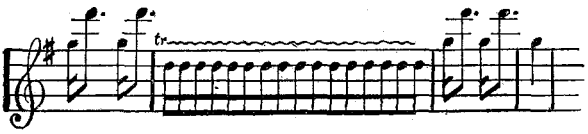
same bird is also the author of the sweet little refrain which we hear in the spring-time whenever some ambitious chickadee would fain prove himself a very nightingale to the one that he loves best.

The pathway we have, in imagination, followed with the naturalist leads into

Song Sparrow's Song.

the little woods, and turning about among hillocks and trees, begins unmistakably to dip downward. In the Eastern States the woods are usually left standing along hillsides, ravines, brooksides, and other places too uneven for cultivation, and soon we come to the little stream that had spoilt this place in the ploughman's eyes, and saved this little shelter-nook of second growth timber.

A pair of song sparrows is usually found for every hundred yards of such running streams, rarely, indeed, is the stream without its song sparrow, and rarely is the bird seen away from its beloved stream. He, above all others, is the brook bird; he *can* live contentedly by a little pond, and has even been found frequenting a low, damp thicket; but it is down by the running, flashing water, that he finds his ideal home, and here, on some low twig over the stream, he chants that sweet song which, in Quebec, has won for him, the name of Rossignol.

In general appearance he is much like his near relatives, but a single chirp from his melodious throat, suffices to identify him a hundred yards away.

The birds appear to have made a tacit division of the whole country, and while the song sparrow claims and inhabits exclusively the thickets at the water's edge, the drier and more open underwoods farther back have fallen to the lot of the chewink. Up he flies from among the brown leaves, where he had been bustling about as noisily as a barn fowl, and as he darts into some sheltering thicket he utters his loud "*Towhee*," a note so characteristic that it has become one of his names. His other name, "Chewink," is the opening bar of the spring song that he warbles for hours together from the upper branches of some low shrub. It is remarkable that he has no common name, suggested by his color, for his jet black head and upper parts, relieved by white spots on wing and tail, are always conspicuous, and when a chance view at close quarters is obtained, his chestnut flanks, and pure white breast, are found equally worthy of notice in the forming of a name. His chant has been recorded by Wilson Flagg as shown on p. 763.

But, hark to that loud, harsh, rattling cry! and see flying over the creek the large bluish bird that utters it. See, he suddenly arrests his flight, and, poising an instant in the air, darts downward into the water, to rise again with a glittering object—a fish—in his bill. It is scarcely necessary to say

Song Sparrow.

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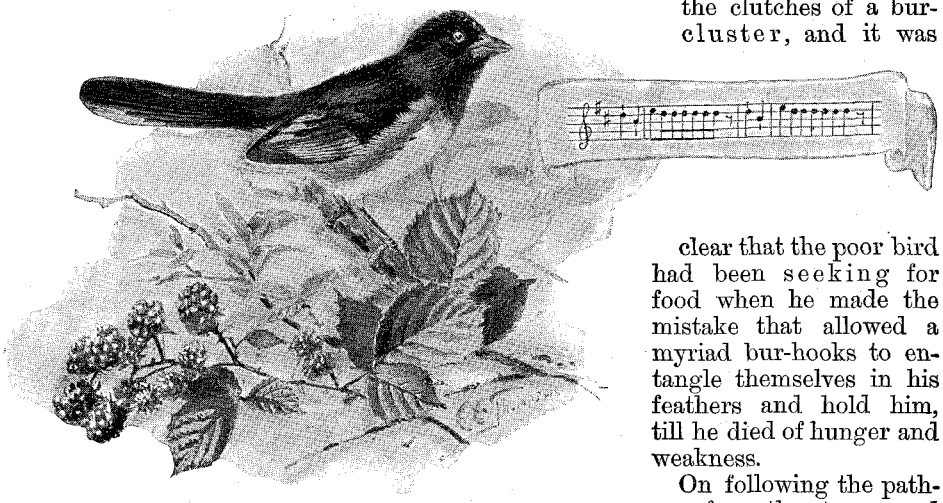
that this is the familiar kingfisher, the ancient proprietor of the fry-swarming rivers, and the pirate of the modern fish-ponds. See the silver wampum necklace that Manabozho conferred on him, at the beginning, as the token of his seigniory, and hark again to his loud rattle as he wings his arrowy way back to the great river where he is at home, back toward the long burrow in the steep clay bank where dwells his brood, and away out of sight in the distance.



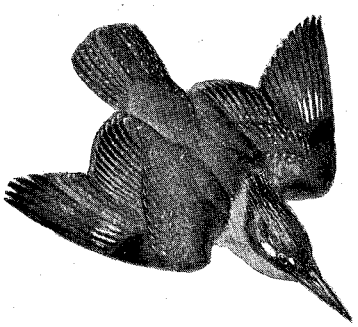
Chewink and his Song.

Leaving the thickets and crossing the "no man's land" of rank burdocks and thistles, the goldfinch or wild canary is seen, perched on a thistle-top, or bounding off through the air, uttering a twitter at each undulation of his flight. He will be known by his small size and rich yellow plumage with black crown, wings, and tail. "Thistle bird" [p. 764] is another name that he bears, on account of his fondness for thistle-seeds as food, and thistle-down for the lining of his nest; indeed, it is said that the reason he nests quite late in the summer, instead of in the spring, is that the thistle-tops may have time to ripen and provide him with the down that he prefers for the completion of his dainty little home.

We have just seen the burdock and the thistle growing together as they often do. Their flowers are much alike, for they are nearly akin, and in this resemblance may lie the explanation of a sad tragedy that has several times happened. In each case the circumstantial evidence was the same. The weather-beaten remains of a goldfinch were found tightly held in the clutches of a bur-cluster, and it was clear that the poor bird had been seeking for food when he made the mistake that allowed a myriad bur-hooks to entangle themselves in his feathers and hold him, till he died of hunger and weakness.

On following the pathway from the stream, and over the bare pasture-land, or the roadway over the hills, one is sure to see, ere long, a little streaky brown sparrow that runs, mouse-like, along the path, keeping ahead of the traveller by making short flights of but a few yards whenever it finds itself too closely approached.

Each time it flits, it exposes the pure white of the outer tail-feathers, and this mark, with the foregoing description, is enough to identify, as the vesper sparrow, the little bird that imagines he is leading the stranger over the hill.



Kingfisher.

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Wild Canary or Thistle Bird—Male and Female.

He is much like his cousin, the song sparrow, but is readily distinguishable by the above characteristics. His name was given him on account of his habit of singing chiefly in the evening after sundown.

There seems an active competition among the birds to bring themselves and their music prominently before the public. One or two, as the robin and shorelark, gain their point by singing earlier than the others; one or two, like the vireo and the indigo bird, by singing in the heat of the day, when other birds are silent; and one or two achieve it by their power, brilliancy, or indefatigability; while our little vesper sparrow is said to have had the same end in view when he made his soft sweet carol the vesper-song of the uplands.

But there, again, is the blue jay's alarm note: he is a thief himself, and yet his righteous indignation is unequalled when another thief is discovered in search of plunder. He was the first to see the great red-tailed hawk that, with hungry eyes came sailing over the trees; he gave the alarm, but took good care to keep himself well under cover, leaving the battle to another bird smaller than himself. But this smaller bird never hesitates: out of his home in the orchard, straight toward the pirate he soars, loudly twittering his war-cry, and displaying the warrior plume of flame-colored feather in his head, upward, till high above both trees and hawk, he mounts, then swoops down on him in fierce anger, darting about, swooping and fluttering, striking downward between the great pinions of the hawk, till the latter is so tormented, mentally, rather than bodily, that he hurries away from the neighborhood, and the victo-

Vesper Sparrow and Nest.

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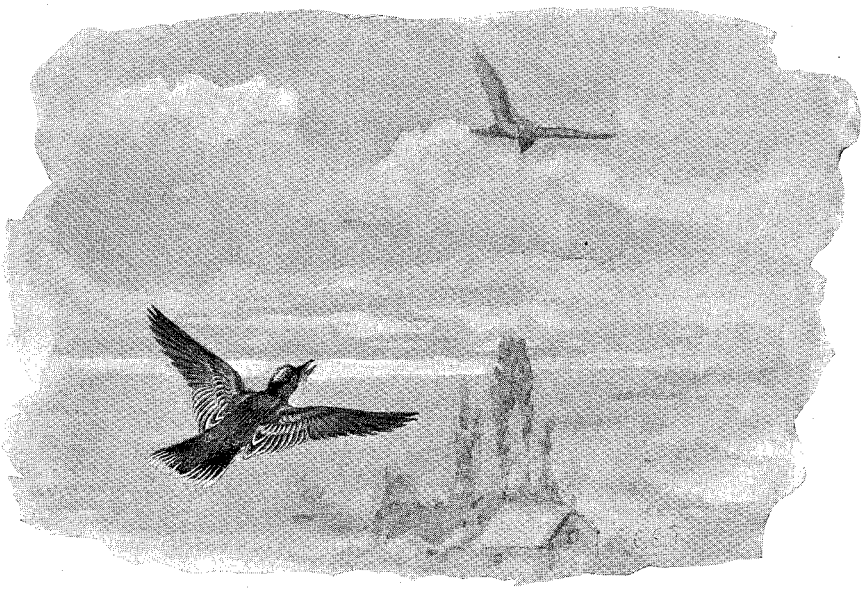
rious kingbird, having pursued him a quarter of a mile or more, leaves him and returns to his own nest, and, perhaps, barely in time to save it from the shameless blue jay, who was himself the first to cry, "Stop thief!"

Every farmer knows the kingbird, or bee-martin. In color he is dark slate above, becoming black on the tail and head; a band across the tip of his tail and all below is pure white. But his crest—the flame-colored badge—is lost, hidden beneath the other feathers, when he returns from his foray; it is visible only when erect, as in the excitement of combat, or when pirouetting in the air to win the admiration of his queen.



The Kingbird Going to Meet the Hawk.

We are among the orchard-birds now, and are struck at once by their great number, variety, and tameness. The changes made by the progress of settlement in America resulted, as we have seen, in the Eastward extension of prairie lands with their characteristic birds; caused also a great multiplication of what may be called woodland edges or half-wooded country. Wherever there was a break in the ancient forest, its edges were tenanted by their own peculiar species of birds, and in the breaking up of the great woods these edge lands have been enormously extended, and there has been a corresponding increase in their characteristic feathered tribes. Among these are the common jenny wren, known at once by his diminutive size and short tail carried at right angles to his back [p. 766]; the gorgeous orange and black oriole; the plain, dull-colored peewee or phœbe, sitting on the house-gable or on a dead branch, moving his tail up and down, catching insects, or reiterating his own name, "*phœbe, phœbe;*" the happy little chipping sparrow [p. 766], a dull little bird, with a bright little nest and eggs, known at once by its being a very small sparrow, having a black bill, a chestnut cap, and no streaks on its breast; the yellow warbler, known also as the willow-wren, a slender little creature, entirely yellow; and several kinds of swallows.

But the Baltimore oriole [p. 767] deserves a longer notice; he is a prince in a house of princes. The family to which he belongs is composed of birds remarkable either for plumage, note, nest, eggs, or habit. Each can claim something curious and original; but the Baltimore shines in everyone of these particulars, for in

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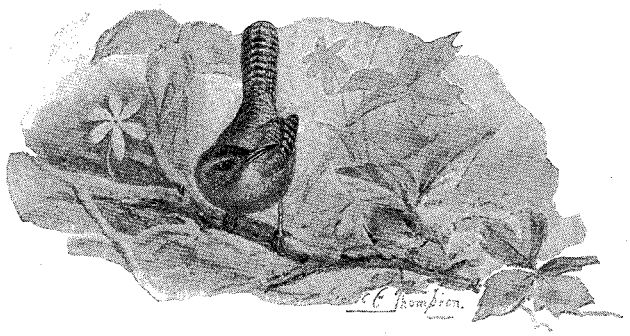
plumage, song, and nest alike, he is an especially remarkable bird. When the Earl of Baltimore became the lord of Maryland, his followers quickly noticed the correspondence between his heraldic livery of orange and black and the orange and black of the splendid bird that so abounded in the new estates, so that, very naturally, the name "Baltimore bird" was suggested, and has been borne ever since.

Chipping Sparrow.

His nest is one of the most wonderful examples of bird-weaving in existence. It is made of separate threads, strings, horsehair, or strips of bark, closely interwoven into a sort of sack, and so firmly knit together that it will bear a weight of twenty or thirty pounds. In the Southern parts of this bird's range, the nest is suspended from two or three terminal twigs for protection from numerous enemies, such as snakes, opossums, and the like; it is also made six or seven inches in depth to prevent the eggs being thrown out by the high winds. But in the colder North, where tree-climbing foes are rare, it is hung, not at the extremities of the branches, but in a cluster of twigs that affords shelter. It is much shallower than when exposed to the wind, but is very thickly woven, and lined with soft, warm materials. The oriole's loud, fife-like notes ringing from the high tree-tops in the morning are an ample refutation of the old theory that melody and bright plumage have never been bestowed on the same bird.

In the same family with the wonderful Baltimore is the cowbird [p. 768], a species that affords a complete contrast to the famed oriole in almost every respect. The cowbird is abundant everywhere in the Eastern States. It is doubtless one of those that have increased with deforesting, for it is a bird of the meadows and plains. Its name is derived from its habit of frequenting cow-pastures, where it may be seen following the grazing kine to feed on the flies which swarm about them. In color the males are glossy black with brown heads, the females dull, brownish gray; in size it is similar to the oriole, that is, about eight inches in length. But the most interesting part of its history is its breeding habit.



Common Wren.

The cowbird, like the European cuckoo, never pairs, builds a nest, or hatches its own young. The flocks that frequent cow-pastures are composed of males and females that consort together promiscuously, and the female, when the time comes, leaves her companions and sets out alone to find the nest of some small

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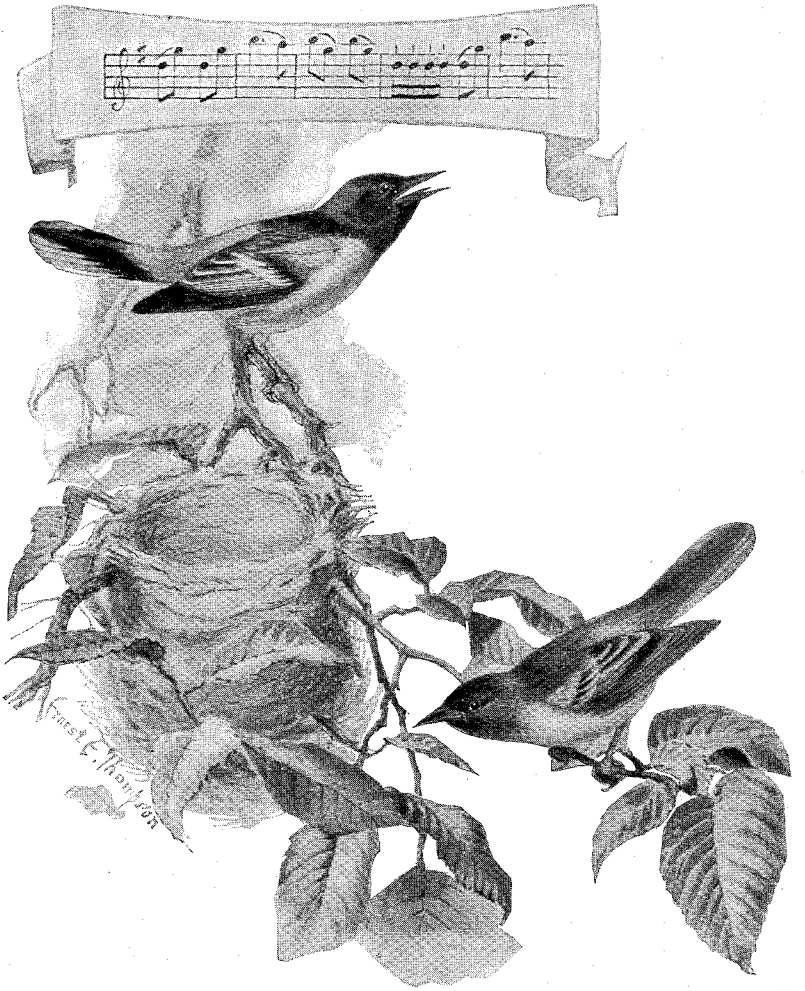
bird in which she lays the egg, and then leaves it entirely to the care of the unwilling, and often unwitting, foster-parents. As a rule this means the destruction of the bird's own brood, for the young cowbird, being hatched sooner than the true offspring, monopolizes all attentions, and the other young, if hatched at all, die of unavoidable neglect.

Nearly all small birds that make an open nest near the ground are habitually imposed on by the cowbird, and whether or not they detect the fraud, they generally carry out faithfully the unsought task. But there are, at least, two of our common orchard-birds that have discovered methods of outwitting this immoral and lawless vagabond. The catbird [p. 768], one of these, may, generally, be found in the dark hedge or thicket at the bottom of the orchard. That scolding, whistling, chirping serenade, intermixed with peculiar, kitten-like mewings, is the song of the bird we are seeking, and is also the obvious explanation of the bird's name. In appearance the catbird is of a dull slaty color, with a black cap and tail, and just under the base of the tail a chestnut patch. Its beak and form are slender, and its size about that of a robin,



Pair of Baltimore Orioles—Nest and Song.

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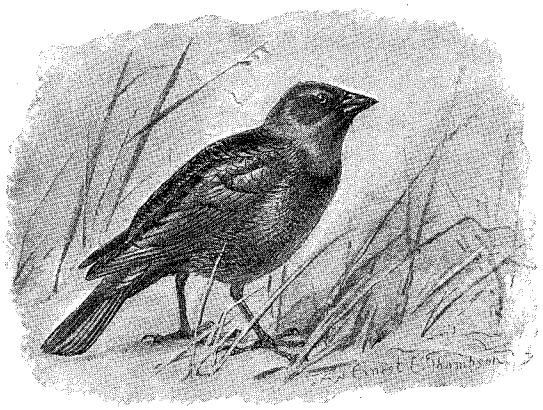
that is, nine inches in length. Its nest is usually built of dark rootlets; thus we have a dark bird building, in a gloomy thicket, a black nest, to contain the brightest blue-green eggs that ever were laid. Their exquisite pale peacock color is without equal among the eggs of our Eastern birds; and, in this, without doubt, lies partly the reason why the catbird is not to be imposed on by the cowbird. The egg of the latter is freckled with pale brownish spots, and contrasts strongly with the eggs of the former bird, so that the intruder is at once recognized, and the catbird, whose maternal instincts are of a high order, summarily ejects the embryo vagabond, and complacently proceeds with her own duties.

Not so, however, that animated flake of gold, the yellow warbler, or, as he is called in many localities, "willow-wren." He is a slender little bird, about five inches long; that is, an inch shorter than an English sparrow and much slimmer than that sturdy little invader. At first sight he seems to be all of a golden-yellow color, but a closer inspection, which he readily allows, shows that his back is tinged with olive and his breast streaked with chestnut. This gay little creature usually leads a merry life among the ornamental shrubs



Cowbird.

of the lawn, and fearlessly builds his dainty cradle of down close to the window, and flits merrily through the lilacs, or sings his simple warble again and again, and seems absolutely happy with his mate and his nest, until, on an evil day, his new-made home is discovered by the prying eye of that ogre, the cowbird, who quickly shifts, from herself

Catbird.

to the warbler, the responsibility of her next offspring. The woe of the warblers on discovering the foundling egg is exceedingly touching. They are not duped any more than are the catbirds, they know quite well what it means; but not having the strength to eject the intruding egg, they usually resign themselves to their lot and attempt to rear the stranger with their own family, for with these birds to desert their nest is out of the question. But it not unfrequently happens that the hasty cowbird deposits her egg before the warbler has begun to lay, and then the bright little builders, on recovering from the first disagreeable shock of surprise, have avoided the apparent alternatives of deserting their nest or rearing the stranger, by building a new story to the nest, thereby relegating the intrusive egg to decay in the cellar. One instance is on record where

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this occurred twice in the same nest, so that it was one of three stories; in each of the lower ones a cowbird's egg was being addled, and in the topmost the true brood of the quick-witted warblers was successfully hatched and reared.

The cowbird and the oriole belong to the Icteridæ, a family of birds which, though not large in our region, shows among its members a remarkable diversity of character and plumage. In it also are the meadow lark, the bobolink, the grakle, and the redwing; birds, which, though nearly akin, have almost nothing in common in habits or outward appearance. The grakle [p. 770] is one that we may discover before leaving the orchard; he is commonly seen displaying his gorgeous plumage on the lawn, or squealing from the top of a spruce-tree. He is a handsome fellow, about a foot in length, and although at first and distant view he is a *black*bird simply, he is really a very bird of paradise, for his whole body is glossed with a resplendent bronze green, and his head and neck are lovely with the purples and blues of the peacock. He is a showy, impudent bird, a combination of magpie, blue jay, and crow, and though he is a nest-robber at times, and a field-robber always, his fine appearance furnishes excuse enough for his continued existence. He would not be a true member of his family if he did not affect some oddity of nesting habit, and he alone, of our Eastern starlings, is found building in a hollow tree, or an abandoned woodpecker's hole. The eggs are very remarkable; their pale bluish shell is sparsely covered with the most curious drawings in blackish-brown; the subjects are of every kind,—dogs, cats, stars, men, parrots, weasels, snakes, insects, fish, letters, signs, and symbols may be seen sharply silhouetted on these extraordinary eggs, and if the bird had been a European one we would long ago have had endless legends about them, and numberless weird potencies ascribed to the cabalistic signs and outlines they present.

As we leave the orchard we suddenly see in the bright sunlight the gorgeous plumage of the tanager [p. 771], the Prometheus of Indian legends; the firebird, warbird, and blood-robin of the country folk. His rich scarlet livery, relieved by the jet black of his wings and tail, fairly blazes in the sunlight. In length he is about seven inches, that is, a little larger than a sparrow, and in habits rather tame, yet without having any special liking for the vicinity of

Yellow Warblers and Nest.

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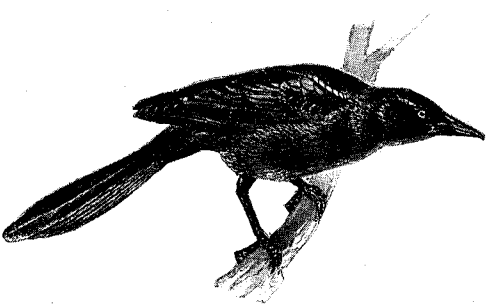
man ; indeed, he is somewhat out of place in an orchard, except at the migratory season. He is a true forester, and high on the topmost boughs of the tallest maples and beeches his soft whistle is to be heard throughout the early summer. His mate, by the way, is of dull olive green, without a trace of scarlet anywhere, and the young ones, at first, are like the mother, but the males gradually exchange the green for the brilliant scarlet of the race.

Egg of Grakle.

But none of our native birds has made for himself a greater name than the bobolink [p. 772], the mad harlequin of the meadows. Of course the children were the first to recognize his genius and introduce him to society. But he has since graduated from the nursery rhyme, and, like the chickadee, is now making his way in the literary world. If there is one of these birds in our meadows we shall not have long to wait before both seeing and hearing him.

A single note of his unparalleled song, or a single glimpse of his odd black-and-white livery, is sufficient to identify him a mile off, after once having made his acquaintance. See him yonder, skimming over the meadow with down-curved, vibratory wings, his plumage all jet black, except the white marks on his back, and the creamy patch on his nape. Hark to his bubbling, jingling, inexpressible music as he curvets and flutters in the air. Some of the older writers on the birds of New England say that the boys there translate the song into "*Bobolink, bobolink, Tom Denny, Tom Denny, come pay me the sixpence you've owed me more than a year and a half ago. I paid you, I paid you. You didn't. I did. You didn't, you lie, you cheat, you cheat, you cheat!*" Then, as Nuttall, the man of bird-song adds : "However puerile this odd phrase may appear, it is quite amusing to find how near it approaches to the time and expression of the notes when pronounced in a hurried manner." It is indeed amusing, and, more than that, it is the only method of graphic description that is available, for musical notes and verbal definitions are equally powerless to reproduce this remarkable serenade.

Another style of descriptive effort has been very well attempted by Wilson Flagg, whose poem, "The O'Lincon Family," is full of the strange, jerky, bubbling music that characterizes the



The Grakle or Crow-blackbird.

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birds he is describing. The first stanza is as follows:

"A flock of merry singing-birds were sporting in the grove,
Some were warbling cheerily, and some were making love.
There were Bobolincon, Wadolincon, Winterseeble, Conquedle,
A livelier set were never led by tabor, pipe, or fiddle:
Crying, 'Phew, shew, Wadolincon; see, see, Bobolincon
Down among the tickle-tops, hiding in the buttercups;
I know the saucy chap; I see his shining cap
Bobbing in the clover there,—see, see, see.'"

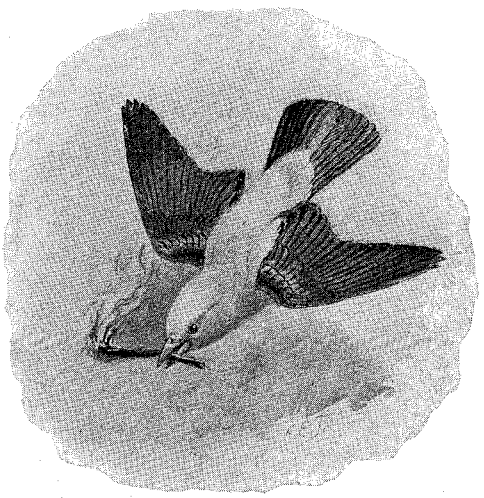
Of course the bobolink's chief name was suggested by his chief peculiarity, his song; but another, skunk-blackbird, alludes to the skunk-like color and pattern of his dress, and in the others, meadowwink, reed-bird, rice-bird, troopial, we have a brief summary of his habits, as a meadow-singer in June, a marsh resident in August, a rice-eater in September, and, in the winter, a bird that habitually flies in great troops or flocks.

In crossing toward the haunts of the bobolink we may spring the meadow lark [p. 772], another of the famed starlings. As he flies, he seems a large, thickset gray bird, with a short tail, edged with white, and a fashion of flapping and sailing by turns, as he moves straight away. He is as large as a quail, and so plump that many regard him as a game-bird. He has a trick of always presenting his back, so that he may be seen alive many times before discovering that his breast is of an intensely golden-yellow, with a beautiful black crescent in the middle. His loud whistle from the distant fence-post, whither he betakes himself, is like "*et sé dee ah*" oft-repeated at intervals.

But another starling now flies overhead at a considerable height, pure black he seems to be, and his note is a single shrill whistle. This is the red-wing [p. 773]. Away over the meadow he flies, straight to the distant swamp, where cat-tails, willows, and water combine to make a sort of final refuge and moated castle of birds. Pure black he appeared as he flew, but, now, at home, on some willow-branch in sight of his brown-streaked mate, he shows a new feature — the blazing scarlet patch of feathers on the bend of each wing, and as he amorously struts before his lady-love, he is at no little pains to display it to the best advantage.

The meadow lark builds its nest on the ground, and roofs it over with bent grass; but the redwing, or soldier-blackbird, must, of course, have an entirely new manner of life, and, away out on the frog-pond, out of the reach of snapping-turtles and small boys, he selects a bunch of projecting twigs, and among them he suspends the neat, strongly woven basket that is the cradle of his brood.

His habits and notes, too, are entirely his own. With fluttering wings and tail he poses in front of his inamorata, swelling out and raising up his bright plumes until he appears to be enveloped in scarlet, and gurgles out a gut-



The Tanager—an Indian Legend.

tural "*Look at me!*" with the accent on the *me*. But the earnest prayer and impressive attitude of the speaker seem alike thrown away on the female, who, with an incredible amount of unconcern, goes quietly about her business as though she were alone; nevertheless, subsequent events would indicate that her apathy was entirely assumed, for in due course the nest is filled with the growing fledglings and her loving solicitude for their welfare abundantly attests the joy and pride she feels in her off-

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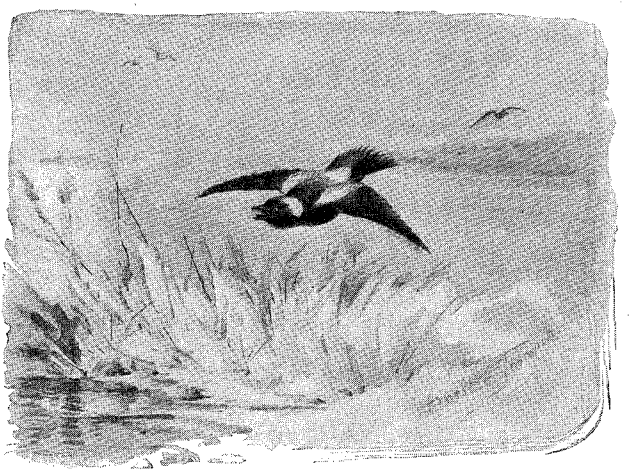
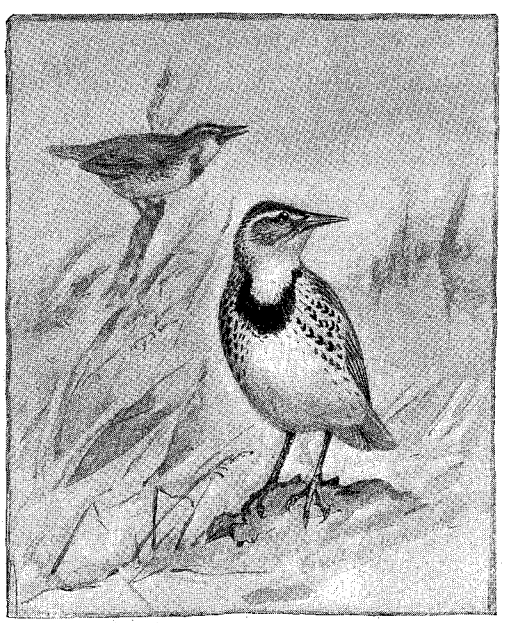
spring. But the father, the gay and ardent lover, is, I fear, sadly lacking in such admirable emotions; there is yet to be written a dark and discreditable chapter in his life.

We have seen how devoid of parental affection is the cowbird. We know that in the far South there are other blackbirds that leave the care of the eggs and young entirely to the females, and go off to lead a merry bachelor life as soon as incubation begins, and the redwing, it seems, is not altogether without the family taint, for I have, more than once, met with evidence that his love-fires languish sadly as the honeymoon wanes, and his devotion to his home duties succumbs entirely as soon as the joys of love are exchanged for its responsibilities. He becomes, in fact, prone to take his quiet departure in company of a merry host of similar delinquents, leaving his irreproachable wife to provide for the family as best she can. But no trial is too great for her constancy, and in due time the little redwings are fully grown and fledged, and when strong enough on the wing they fly with her to rejoin their shameless father in the distant marshes.



Bobolink.

But the day is advancing. The familiar robin has ceased to sing, and is foraging on the lawn, stamping cunningly with his feet close to a worm-hole, then waiting quietly, with his head on one side, to see the effect, and so manœuvring until, at length, the worm ventures out, but only to be seized, and, after a struggle, borne away to his young in the broad nest of mud and sticks that is saddled on the large apple-bough in the adjacent orchard.



Meadow Lark.

The wood thrush [p. 774], high up in some shade-tree, pours out his liquid "*pee-rool-ya-ta-lee*," then rings his little silver bell, sings another bar, and again plays his own accompaniment, and all the while looks serenely down on you, beneath him in every sense of the word. With a fair glass you can see him clearly, about eight inches long, above of a bright cinnamon color, which is brightest on the head, and all below white, with large black spots. His nest is somewhat like that of the robin; in fact they are near relatives, and the latter seems proud of the connection, for he often calls

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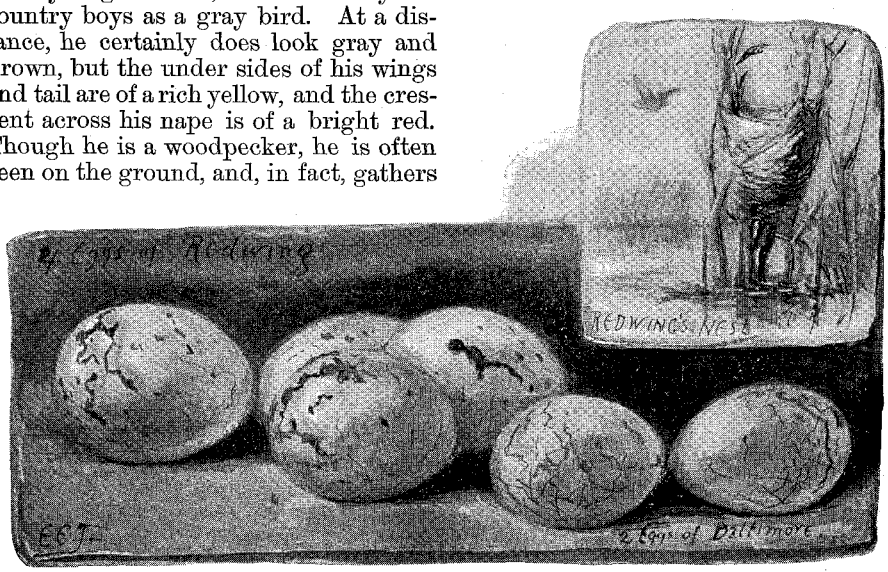
Redwinged Blackbird—Male and Female.

attention to it by fashioning parts of his song on the model furnished him by his cousin in the ermine vest.

On the lawn we may also see the flicker [p. 774], or golden-winged woodpecker, a large bird, which, though clad in very bright colors, is described by the country boys as a gray bird. At a distance, he certainly does look gray and brown, but the under sides of his wings and tail are of a rich yellow, and the crescent across his nape is of a bright red. Though he is a woodpecker, he is often seen on the ground, and, in fact, gathers at least one-half of his food there. As he flies, one sees a large gray bird with a dim halo of yellow about it, and on the rump a blazing star of purest white. This is, of course, as he flies from one, if, by chance, he is coming toward the observer, the white star is replaced by the black moon which he wears on his breast. The flicker has a long array of names, many of them, like flicker, clape, wake-up, yarrup, etc., are derived from his notes, which are varied and sonorous; others, like, high-hole and high-holder, allude to his true woodpecker habit of boring a hole for his nest high up in some dead trunk. The Spaniards called him, "carpentero," and in the sense of worker in wood and house-provider for others, this is very apt, for at least a score of species stand ready to avail themselves of the commodious quarters excavated by the flicker, as soon as he sees fit to abandon it.

Again, passing through the orchard, we may espy the humble relative of the flicker, the little black and white woodpecker, or his brother, the hairy woodpecker, in search of his prey about the bark of the old apple-trees [p. 775]. While high in the air over all, and making their citadel about the outbuildings, are the four common swallows—the barn-swallow [p. 775], known, at once, by his pale chestnut breast and long forked tail; the cliff-swallow, recognizable by his



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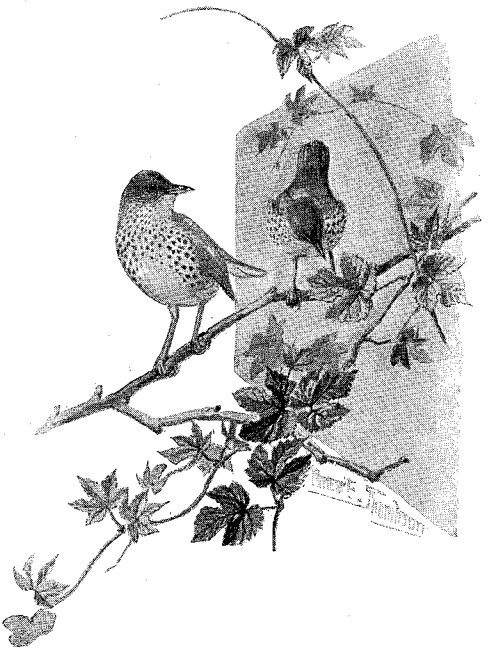
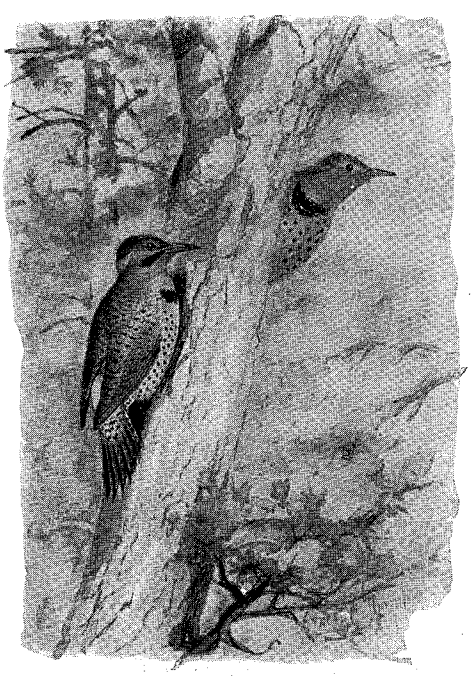


Wood Thrushes—Hop Vine.

short tail and white crescent on his forehead; the martin, known by his great size and black color, and the white-breasted or wood-swallow [p. 776], a delicate little bird of the size of a sparrow. The last is called tree-swallow in some regions, because it nests in hollow trees, and in others, the singing-swallow, because, more than any other of its tribe, it has a habit of singing sweetly as it sits in the sun on some convenient perch. The last two, with the bluebird and the English sparrow, are the principal candidates for the occupancy of the small bird-boxes put up against outbuildings and on poles, by those who wish to encourage the birds about their dwellings.

The first two of these swallows are noted for the remarkable mud nests which they make under the eaves of barns; the first usually selects a site inside the building, and it is with a view to giving them a convenient entrance, that farmers cut in the gables those holes, often of grotesque shapes, that frequently arouse the curiosity of passing citizens. The nest is made of pellets of mud carefully kneaded at the water's edge, and stuck on in regular successive layers until the appointed cup-shape is complete, and, after a proper time for drying is allowed, the nest is finished with a lining of straw and feathers.

But the cliff-swallow carries the process of nest-building a step farther than this; he makes not a cup, but a decanter, not a mere bracket, but a complete globe, with an entrance-porch that is sometimes prolonged into a veritable spout. Both these birds nest in colonies, and, like swallows generally, are very partial to the buildings and neighborhood of man. In fact, the only one of this tribe that is indifferent to man is the little bank-swallow. It is found nesting in colonies along the banks of rivers, where they are steep enough to afford protection and soft enough to be bored into by the beak of this hard-working little



Flickers—Male and Female.

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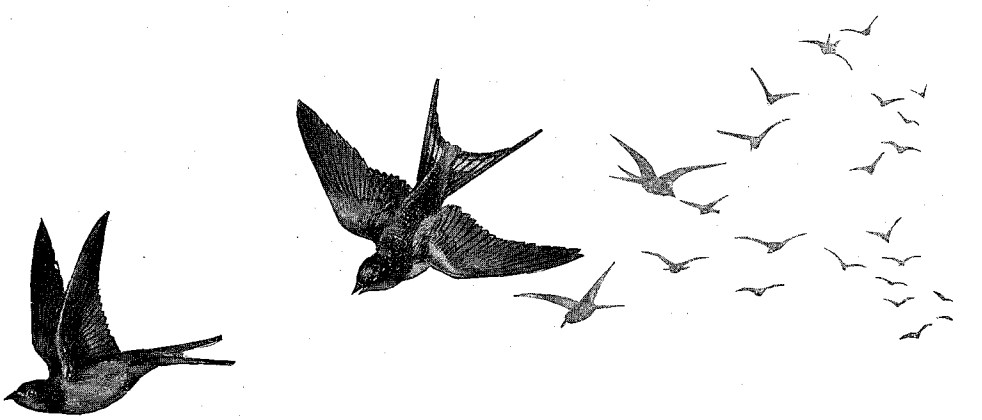
Pair of Hairy Woodpeckers—Sapsucker—Downy Woodpecker.

excavator. Each pair make their own nesting-hole, and at the end of the burrow, which is usually two or three feet long, is a little elevated chamber, in whose gloomy recesses the crystalline eggs are laid, and this little creature of sunlight is first ushered into the world.

Here we have enumerated some twenty-five birds that anyone may see on a fine May day in the temperate latitudes of the Eastern region. These cannot fail of being seen, and probably the voices of twice as many are heard; but the trained ear is necessary to distinguish many of the obscurer birds, and detect the fifty odd that may be within observation during a brief excursion through a diversified country.

In this short sketch we have omitted many birds that merely flew past, and have left unnoticed many whose notes are the only signs by which their exist-



Barn-swallows.

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ence could be detected. But those who once learn a new bird will be surprised to find that, like a newly learned word, it will afterward be met with at almost every step, and they will then wonder how they could ever have been so blind as to have missed such a remarkably conspicuous feature of the landscape, or so deaf as not to have heard such a prominent voice in the choir of natural sounds that greet them on a spring morning.

The White-breasted or Wood-swallow.

ENDYMION AND A PORTRAIT OF KEATS.

By Edith M. Thomas.

WHETHER, uplifting slow his dreamful head,
He leaves a couch the fragrant pine has strown,
Whether the dim, enchanted woods have known
The sleeper's unimperilled velvet tread;
Or whether, through some winding cavern led,
That like the shell rings drear with ocean's moan,
He wanders till the sea, wide, bright, and lone,
Beneath his visionary eye is spread—
Whether awake, or still by slumber bound,
Behold that shepherd with a world foregone,
To hoard the white rays of a mystic Dawn,
A listener to aerial silver sound,
With subtle moonlight smile devote, withdrawn!
Behold Endymion whom a Love unknown hath crowned!

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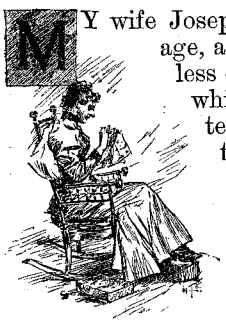
THE OPINIONS OF A PHILOSOPHER.

By Robert Grant.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY W. T. SMEDLEY.

I.



MY wife Josephine declares that I have become a philosopher in my old age, and perhaps she is right. Now that I am forty, and a trifle less elastic in my movements, with patches of gray about my ears which give me a more venerable appearance, I certainly have a tendency to look at the world as through a glass. Yet not altogether darkly be it said. That is I trust I am no cynic like that fellow Diogenes who set the fashion centuries ago of turning up the nose at everything. I have a natural sunniness of disposition which would, I believe, be proof against the sardonic fumes of contemplation even though I were a real philosopher.

However, just as the mongoose of the bagman's story was not a real mongoose, neither am I a real philosopher.

You will remember that Diogenes, who was a real philosopher, occupied a tub as a permanent residence. He would roll in hot sand during the heat of summer, and embrace a statue of snow in winter, just to show his superiority to ordinary human conventions and how much wiser he was than the rest of the world. The real philosophers of the present day are not quite so peculiar; but they are apt to be fearfully and wonderfully superior to the weaknesses of humanity. For the most part they are to be found in the peaceful environs of a university or on some mountain top a Sabbath day's journey from the hum of civilization, where they eschew nearly everything which the every-day mortal finds requisite to comfort and convenience, unless it be whiskey and water. I have sometimes fancied that more real philosophers than we are aware of are partial on the sly to whiskey and water. But that is neither here nor there; for, as I have already stated, I am not a real philosopher.

"My wife Josephine declares that I have become a philosopher."

I have altogether too many faults to be one, and should constantly be flying in the face of my own theories. Barring the aforesaid weakness for whiskey and water, it is fair to assume that the average real philosopher lives up to his own lights and by them; whereas I, at least according to Josephine, am liable to be frightfully inconsistent. She has never forgotten my profanity on the occasion when we discovered after dinner that the soot had come down in the drawing-room and was over everything in spite of the fact that the chimney had been swept three weeks before.

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Now if there is one thing which I abhor and am perpetually inveighing against as vulgar and futile, it is unbridled language. Josephine must have heard me say fifty times if she has heard me once that the man who fouls his tongue with an oath is a senseless oaf. And yet I am bound to admit that when I discovered what had happened I swore deliberately and roundly like the veriest trooper. In order to appreciate the situation exactly I should add that it has long been a mooted point between Josephine and me whether chimneys require to be swept at all. My darling insists that the sweep shall overhaul the house annually, while I cling, with what she is pleased to call masculine fatuity, to the theory that soot, like sleeping dogs, should be let alone.

Have you ever entered a drawing-room just after a healthy, thorough fall of soot? If so, you will appreciate what is meant by its all pervasiveness.

"More real philosophers than we are aware of are partial on the sly to whiskey and water."

The remotest articles of furniture are rife with infinitesimal smut, much as they were rife with the remains of the lady in Kipling's story after the jealous orang-outang had done with her. And yet granting that the provocation was dire, a philosopher, a real philosopher, would have acted very differently. A philosopher of the grandest type would have reasoned that what was done was done, and that there was no more use in crying over fallen soot than over spilt milk. He would calmly have adopted prompt measures to ameliorate the situation, and after the servants were fairly at work would have taken his wife apart and pointed out to her, in well-chosen language, that here was only another instance of his superior wisdom. One of a more virulent type, but still a philosopher, might have indulged in mirth—quiet sarcastic mirth. No person of a truly philosophic cast of mind and with a rooted antipathy to damning would have sworn lustily as I did.

I remember taking little Fred, my namesake and eldest son, to skate with me one winter's afternoon on a suburban pond. He did famously for a tyro, but we both wearied at last of his everlasting strife to maintain the perpendicular, and I was conscious of a rush of joy when he became completely absorbed in watching a man who was fishing for pickerel. Have you ever fished for pickerel through a hole in the ice? If so you will recall that it is chilly and rather dispiriting work, especially if the fish are shy. They certainly were shy that afternoon, for the individual in question had angled long and bagged nothing, as I gleaned from the answers to the direct interrogatories put by my urchin during the few minutes I stood paternally by and watched the proceedings.

"Caught anything?"

"Nop."

"Had a bite?"

"Nop."

"How long you been fishing?"

"An hour."

As I glided away light-heartedly on the delicious curves of the outer edge, I reflected that he was evidently a persevering pot-hunter who would not be easily discouraged, and that I could count upon his engrossing the attention of my offspring for a considerable period. Accordingly, I was surprised some five minutes later to observe the fisherman (who wore no skates) shambling across the pond toward the shore. Glancing from him to his late station I

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perceived a little group of skaters gathered around my son and heir, who was dabbling with a stick in the abandoned hole. They appeared to be diverted by something, and one of them, my friend Harry Bolles, who had his handerchief up to his mouth, made a bee-line to meet me. From his lips I learned what had happened, which was this wise: The horny-handed pot-hunter, having presently pulled a solitary pickerel out upon the ice and freed it from his hook, turned aside to cut another piece of bait; whereupon my hopeful picked up the fish and popped it back into its native element without so much as a syllable of commentary; and thereupon (being act three in the tragedy) he of the horny-hand, having realized the situation in its terrible entirety, pulled up his line, shovelled back the particles of ice into the hole and betook himself upon his shambling way without one word. Not a word, mark you. There was a real philosopher if you like, a thorough-going, square-trotting philosopher. The only alternative was child-murder or silence, and my pot-hunter chose the simplest form of the dilemma. "I thought the fish would like it," said little Fred, when interrogated upon the subject.

"Have you ever entered a drawing-room just after a healthy, thorough fall of soot?"

And yet, despite my occasional inability to practice what I preach, Josephine is correct in her diagnosis that my cast of mind is becoming more philosophic as the years roll on. The consciousness that I am the author of four children (two strapping sons and two tall daughters), anyone of whom may constitute me a grandfather before I am fifty, renders me conservative and disposed, metaphorically speaking, to draw in my horns a little. I am beginning to go to church again, for instance. You may have taken it for granted that I have been regular in my attendance at the sanctuary. Certainly I have never been a scoffer; but, on the other hand, I must confess that somehow it has come to pass since Josephine and I plighted our troth that our pew has stood empty on the Lord's day oftener than the orthodox consider fitting. And the worst of it is I used to attend service about every other Sabbath before I became a benedict, and Josephine taught a Sunday-school class up to within six months of our wedding ceremony. She, dear girl, has harbored ever since the belief that she continues to go to church almost every Sunday either in the morning or the afternoon, a harmless delusion which for some time I took no pains to dispel, knowing as I did that she meant to go every Sunday. Yet I knew also that pitiless, unemotional statistics would reveal an average attendance on her part of rather less than ten times in the course of each year. I was brute enough finally to call her attention to a tally-sheet, covering a period of three calendar months, which I had kept for my private edification, and I was punished by seeing her sweet eyes fill with tears before she proceeded to plead to the indictment.

"You know, Fred, perfectly well that I have to stay at home with the children every other Sunday morning in order to allow Lucille to go to church."

"But how about the other mornings and all the afternoons?" I inquired, with the effrontery of a hardened sinner seizing his opportunity to take a saint to task.

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Josephine blushed, partly from guilt and partly from indignation. "It rained torrents last Sunday morning, and Sunday morning fortnight—er—I was sick. I remember that I was all dressed to go one afternoon when old Mr. Philipps called and I didn't like to leave him. Besides, I feel as though I ought to stay at home occasionally on Sunday afternoons in order to teach the children the Scriptures. The Sunday morning before that—er—I went. No, it must have been a fortnight previous, for I recollect now that I had planned to go, when you said that you hated to skate alone and declined to take the entire responsibility of the children on the pond on account of little Fred and the pickerel."

"I was punished by seeing her sweet eyes fill with tears."

"And I said, too, I remember, that in all probability there wouldn't be black ice again all winter."

"You did, you did," my darling cried, with tragic impetuosity, "and it is cruel of you to remind me of it."

"Moreover it was a correct prophecy. It snowed that very night and the people who waited until Monday were nowhere."

"Oh, Fred, Fred, I'm a wicked woman. You're the last person in the world who ought to tax me with it, but it is true. I don't go to church as I ought. And yet I do mean to go. But if it isn't one thing which prevents, it's another. Lucille must have every other Sunday morning, and you seem so disappointed if I refuse to go skating or canoeing with you and the children on the fine days that I foolishly yield."

"And you the daughter of a deacon," I continued, unsparingly. Let me state by way of explanation that Josephine's late father was for many years one of the pillars of the religious society to which he belonged.

"I know, I know. It is shameful. I—we are little better than heathens, Fred. Only think of it, four times in three months!" she added, glancing at the tell-tale sheet. "And I brought up to go regularly both morning and afternoon in addition to Sunday-school! I am a heathen; and as for you, I don't know what to call you!" she exclaimed, with a sad, reproachful smile.

So long as Josephine was content to berate herself without including me in her anathemas, I had been ready to acquiesce in what she said, but now that she seemed disposed to drag me into the conversation I felt it incumbent upon me to reply with dignity:

"Will you please explain, my dear, why it is that, though I used to be a regular worshipper before we became man and wife, I have almost entirely ceased to attend church since that time? Who is responsible for the change, I wonder."

There is a point beyond which it is not safe to prod Josephine, and I could see from the expression of her eye that we had reached it on this occasion. She drew herself up and answered haughtily.

"I have heard you make that insinuation several times before, Fred. It is not merely silly, it is disgraceful. I keep you from church? Don't you know," she exclaimed, with a quaver of emotion, "that your refusal to go is a

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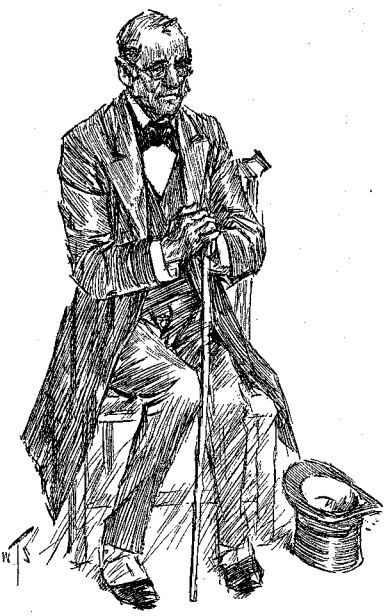

"One of the pillars of the religious society."

source of genuine grief to me, and that I just hate to go alone? Don't you know that I should like nothing better than to go with you every Sunday, and that I am ready to go to any church you will select?"

"Yes," I answered, doggedly, "I am well aware that you would prefer to have me become anything rather than remain—er—a steadfast worshipper of nature.

Josephine made a little gesture of impatience such as my well-worn apotheosis of nature is apt to evoke. For a few moments she looked as though she were going to cry; then, with an almost passionate outburst, she exclaimed:

"You will promise me, Fred, won't you, that when the children are old enough to understand what it means not to go to church you will go too?"

Now, it may be that my response at the time to this pathetic appeal was not altogether satisfactory to my darling; but she has forgotten her fears and her tears to-day in the happy consciousness that as surely as the bells begin to ring on Sunday morning I begin to brush my silk hat with the feverish impatience of an abandoned churchgoer. Punctuality, which has always seemed to Josephine a pitiful sort of virtue, ranks in my category of human conduct almost on a par with brotherly love, and I am apt to make myself and her pretty miserable on each returning Sabbath by my endeavors to get the family out of the house and into our pew on time. It is only by bearing strictly in mind what day it is that I am able to keep my lips from speaking guile when little Fred remembers at the last moment that he has forgotten his pocket-handkerchief or Josephine's glove bursts open in the process of being hastily rammed on and I am compelled to wait while she sends up stairs for a fresh pair. You should see how her nostrils swell with pride as we sweep by my old pal, Nicholas Long, and his wife, who are manifestly not going to church. I can discern on Nick's face, as we pass, an expression which is half sardonic, half pitiful. Evidently he has not forgotten my quondam oft-repeated vow that no child of mine should be taught the orthodox fairy tales in unlearning which I had spent some of the best years of my life. And now I am a recreant, and he who aided and abetted me in my asseverations of independence remains faithful. Yes, but Nick, poor fellow, has no children.

"There is a point beyond which it is not safe to prod Josephine."

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His grin seems to say, "See what you are missing, poor old patriarch; Dorothy and I are off for a ten-mile tramp in the country."

Yet, despite his apparent jubilation of spirit, I detect a longing expression in Dorothy's eyes and I notice that she steals a second glance over her tailor-made shoulder at little Winona, our youngest, who is an uncommonly pretty child, if I do say it.

"There go a light-hearted, honest couple with the courage of their convictions," I remark to Josephine, tentatively. "Before the sermon has begun they will be on the river and they will come home delightfully tired just in time for dinner."

"Light-hearted? I believe, Fred, that they are both perfectly miserable," she exclaimed, with a sweeping glance of pride at her progeny. "I was thinking just before you spoke how much I pitied that woman."

I can remember as if it were yesterday Nick Long telling me with bubbling ecstasy, shortly after he was engaged, that his ladylove had a clear, analytical mind, almost like a man's. "No nonsense about her," he said. "She sees things just as they are." I rather got the impression at the time that he intended thereby to insinuate gently but plainly that he was a far luckier dog than I who had married a woman with a mind conspicuously feminine. I should like very much to know whether, if Dorothy were to be blessed with children after all, Nick would have to go to church.

"Burglars."

Not only have I lost moral courage in the matter of some of my deepest convictions, but I notice also with consternation that my physical bravery is ebbing away as my years increase. I have drawn the line, for example, squarely and tautly on burglars. One night not very long since I was awakened by noise and, after listening, I came to the conclusion that it proceeded from house-breakers. I slipped out of bed stealthily and put my ear to the bolted chamber door in order to confirm my conviction. My movements aroused Josephine, who sat up in bed and asked hoarsely what the matter was. I put my finger on my lips quite irrelevantly, for it was pitch dark.

"Fred, are there burglars in the house?" she gasped.

"Sh! Yes."

"What are you doing, Fred? Oh, you mus'n't go down and expose yourself on any account." She was evidently very much agitated. "Promise me that you will not."

Having ascertained that the door was secure I walked across the room and turned on the electric light. Josephine was sitting bolt upright, quivering with excitement. Her eyes followed my every movement, as, having slipped on my trousers and a pair of boots, I began to look around me, tramping sturdily.

"Fred, they'll hear you if you make such a noise," said my wife, in an agonized whisper.

"I fervently trust so," I retorted. "That's why I'm doing it."

As I spoke my eye lit at last on something adapted to my purpose. I had been trying to avoid the destruction of a wash basin, and I seized with grateful eagerness the pair of Indian clubs which offered themselves and, lifting them to the level of my brow, let them fall clamorously on the floor. The welkin rang, so to speak, and I sank with nervous exhaustion into an arm-chair.

The house seemed deathly still and it struck me that Josephine on her part

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was ominously quiet. When she spoke at last it was to ask :

"Haven't you a pistol?"

"Yes, dear."

"Are you going to let them take everything?"

"It is for them to decide, darling."

"But, Fred——"

Josephine did not finish her sentence. The words she uttered were, however, so full of poignant surprise and disappointment that I felt constrained to inquire with a guilty attempt at nonchalance :

"Is there anything you would like to have me do?"

"You are the best judge, of course," she answered, coldly. "Only, do you think it is the usual way?"

"The usual way?" I echoed. Among the few points in Josephine's character which irritate me is her weakness for custom, and it is growing on her. "No, I suppose that the correct social thing would have been to stand at the head of the banisters in my nightgown with a lighted candle and make a target of myself."

"Why did you buy a pistol, then?" inquired my better half.

"So that the children needn't shoot themselves with it after it was locked up and the cartridges carefully hidden," I replied, with levity. We were both so heated that we had practically forgotten that flat burglary was supposed to be going on.

"You didn't use to talk in that way," said Josephine, with slow precision. "I only hope, Fred, for your sake that people won't hear about this."

"They will not, certainly, unless you tell them, Josephine."

"Tell them? I wouldn't mention what has happened for the world," she answered, looking at me with a sort of sorrowful disdain. Thus is it that the ideals which women form concerning us are one by one shattered! I am sure that Josephine would have been inconsolable had I fallen a victim to the bullet of a house-breaker. You will recall that her first impulse was to prevent me from exposing myself for the sake of the solid silver service. She had taken it for granted that I would slip the bolt and go part way down stairs, at least, pistol in hand, and she had wished to caution me against undue rashness. Consequently, it was a rude blow to her sensibilities to find that I was such a craven. She cared no more for our apostle spoons and gold-lined vegetable dishes than I did ; it was the principle of the thing which distressed her. Why had I bought a six-shooter shortly after our marriage except to be equipped for just such an emergency? It did certainly seem that I was bound by all the laws of custom to pop at least once over the banisters, even though I took no aim and scurried back into my bedroom immediately after. That would have satisfied her, she subsequently admitted to me; but to drop a pair of Indian clubs on the floor in order to make a clatter could be regarded as little less than pusillanimous, philosophy or no philosophy.

"I sank with nervous exhaustion into an arm-chair."

We have talked it over many times since, and I have endeavored to make plain to her that in the process of evolution thinking men have come to the conclusion that the husband and father who chops logic at dead of night with an accomplished burglar on the wrong side of his chamber door is akin to a lunatic. She listens to my arguments attentively, and she has done me the honor to admit that there is more to be said in my behalf than she thought at first ; but I remember that the last time we conversed upon the subject she shook

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her head with the air of a woman who, in spite of everything, is still of the same opinion, and she murmured gently:

"As I told you before, Fred, if you had fired once over the banisters, I would say nothing."

"But I might have been killed or maimed for life as a consequence," I blurted, feelingly.

"You may remember that I have four children."

Josephine looked a little grave, as she is apt to do at any suggestion of my sudden taking off, but with a sweet sigh she answered, succinctly:

"There are certain risks in this world that a man has to take."

II.

You may remember that I have four children: my namesake Fred, David, who was christened in honor of his maternal grandfather, Josephine, or Josie as we call her in order not to confound her with her mother, and Winona, the baby of the family. We have lately moved into another house. The old one would not hold us any longer. At least Josephine declared that it would not shortly after the agents of the Board of Health fumigated the establishment with sulphur to kill scarlet fever germs. She said it would be cheaper to move than to buy new wall-papers and window-shades. When I asked how this could be she waxed a little wroth at what she called my density, and asked if I did not appreciate that we should have to move at any rate in a year or two in order to provide the children with a bedroom apiece. The necessity for this had not occurred to me, I must confess, and I was making bold to inquire why the two boys could not continue to occupy one room and their sisters another as in the past, when Josephine added, in an awful whisper:

"Besides, the house is overrun with cockroaches. Now mind, Fred," she continued, with an imperative frown, "that is a matter which is not to be repeated to anyone."

"Why should I wish to repeat it?" I asked, meekly.

"I never know beforehand what you will repeat and what you will not. I should expect to hear from Jemima Bolles the next time we met that you had confided it to her husband, and positively I don't care to have her know. Then, too," Josephine continued, with the manner of one selecting a few of many grievances to air, "I haven't an inch of unoccupied closet room; and, moreover, you remember, Fred, that the plumber said the last time he was here that by good rights the plumbing ought all to be renewed." My wife dwelt on these concluding words with insinuating emphasis. She knows that I am daft, as she calls it, on two points, closing windows on the eve of a thunder-shower and defective drainage.

"He said that we could manage very well for some time longer without the slightest real risk," I answered, doughtily.

Josephine's lower lip trembled. Presently she burst out, as though she had resolved to throw feline argument and sophistic persuasion to the winds, "I am just tired of this house, Fred, and I should like to move to-morrow. It is pitifully small and disgustingly dirty with dirt that I can't get rid of, and everything about it is old as the hills. It has never been the same since that fall of soot. If I am obliged to live in it I shall have to, but I am sure that a new, clean house would add ten years to my life."

"Jehosaphat!" I added, startled by this appeal into borrowing the latest

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expletive from the vocabulary of my eldest son, at which Josephine bridled for an instant, thinking that she had detected blasphemy. When it dawned upon her that the phrase in question was only one of those hybrid, meaningless objurgations, the use of which will scarcely justify a lecture, my darling gulped dismally and waited for me to go on.

I am inclined to think that a gradually evolved tendency of mine not to go on when I am expected to was what first prompted my wife to dub me a philosopher. She fancies, dear soul, that she is a loser by this lately developed proclivity to seek refuge in silence on the occasions when she or the children sweep down upon me with some hair-lifting project which craves an immediate decision. But she is in error. It is true there are times when the sweet onslaught of the sons and daughters of my house and their mother has brought the old man to terms on the spot, and wrung from him an immediate permission to do or to spend; but, on the other hand, Josephine, who in spite of her cunning is no philosopher, and her offspring little realize how often their feelings have been saved from laceration by this trick of mine (she calls it a trick) of saying nothing until I have had time for reflection. No man is so wise as his wife and children combined, but it takes him a little while to find it out; and I have discovered that to chew a matter over and over is the surest way to avoid promulgating a stern refusal.

So it was in this instance. Had I uttered the words which rose to my lips, I should have felt obliged to inform Josephine that, her premature taking off to the contrary notwithstanding, to move into another house was out of the question and totally unnecessary. How could I afford to move? Why should we move? The dear old house where we had passed so many joyous years and which Josephine used to say was extraordinarily convenient! I remember that I became successively irate, pathetic, and bumptious in my secret soul. I said to myself stoutly that it was all nonsense, and that by means of a little fresh paint and new coverings for the dining-room chairs, we should be happy where we were for another five years. Cockroaches? Bah! Was there not insect powder?

The married man who knows in his secret soul that he cannot afford to move and who has made up his mind that nothing on earth shall induce him to, is terribly morose for the first few weeks after his wife has unbosomed herself upon the subject. He peruses with a savage frown the real estate columns of the daily newspapers, while he mutters vicious sentences such as, "I'll be blessed if I will!" or "not if I know myself, and I think I do!" He observes moodily every house in process of erection, and scrutinizes those "to let" with an animosity not quite consistent with his determination to put his foot down for once and crush the whole project in the bud. Why is it

"While she peeped into all the closets."

that he slyly visits after business hours the outlying section of the city, where the newest and most desirable residences are offered at fashionable prices? Why at odd moments does he make rows of figures on available scraps of paper and on the blotter at his office,

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and abstractedly compute interest on various sums at four and a half and five per cent.? Why? Because the leaven of his wife's threat that her life will be shortened is working in his bosom and he beholds her in his restless dreams crushed to death beneath a myriad of water-bugs, all for the lack of an inch of closet-room. Why? Because he is haunted perpetually by the countenances of his daughters, on which he reads sorrowfully written that they are wasting away for lack of the bedchamber apiece promised them by their mother. Why? Because, in brief, he is a philosopher, and recognizes that what is to be is to be, and that it is easier to dam up the waters of the Nile with bulrushes (to adopt an elegant and well-seasoned exemplar of im-

"Oh, Fred, you are an angel!"

possibility) than to check the progress of maternal pride.

Some four months after Josephine's announcement that she would live ten years longer elsewhere, I returned home one afternoon with what she subsequently stigmatized as a sly expression about the corners of my mouth. I doubt if I did look sly, for I pride myself on my ability to control my features when it is necessary. However that may be, having persuaded Josephine to take a walk, I conducted her to the door of a newly finished house in the fashionable quarter.

"It might be amusing to go in and look it over," I murmured. "I should rather like to see the ramifications of a modern house."

Josephine, albeit a little surprised, was enraptured. She promptly took the lead and I tramped at her side religiously from cellar to attic, while she peeped into all the closets and investigated the laundry and kitchen accommodations and drew my attention to the fact that the furnace and the ice-chest would be amply separated.

"You know, Fred, that in our house they are side by side and we use a scandalous amount of ice as a consequence," she said, hooking her arm in mine lovingly.

"The whole house strikes me as very well arranged," I retorted, in a bluff tone, as much as to say that I saw through her blandishments. I think she appreciated this. Nevertheless, a few minutes later when we were on the dining-room story, she rubbed her head against my shoulder and said, "Just see what a love of a pantry, Fred. Mine is a hole compared to it. Servants in a house like this would never leave one. And do look at this ceiling. It is simple, but divinely clean and appropriate."

"It is well enough," said I, coldly.

After indulging in various other raptures to which I seemed to turn a deaf ear, and examining everything to her heart's discontent, Josephine moved toward the front door with a sigh. Then it was that I remarked:

"So the house suits you, my dear?"

"It is ideal," she murmured, "simply ideal."

"There are things about it which I don't fancy altogether," said I.

"Oh, Fred, if we only had a house like it, I should be perfectly satisfied."

"Should you? It is yours," I answered.

"Don't be unkind, Fred."

"It is yours," I repeated, a little more explicitly.

Josephine devoured me with inquiring eyes. As she gazed, the expression

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of my countenance brought the blood to her cheeks and she cried with the plaintiveness of a wounded animal, "What do you mean, dear? It is cruel of you to make sport of me."

"I am not making sport of you, Josephine. The house is yours — ours. I bought it yesterday. Here is the deed, if you mistrust me," I continued, solemnly drawing from my pocket the document in question.

Josephine took it like one dazed. She looked from me to it and back again from it to me, then with a joyous laugh she exclaimed, "Really? It is really true? Oh, Fred, you are an angel!"

"No, my dear," I answered, as she flung her arms about my neck—for she does so still once in a while—"I am merely a philosopher who has learned to recognize that what must be must be."

My wife was too much absorbed in her own mysterious mental processes to take note of or analyze this observation. For a few moments she was lost in a brown study, and gazed about her with a glance that struck me as somewhat critical.

"You are an angel, Fred," she repeated, ruminantly. "You took me in splendidly, didn't you? And to think of your doing it all by yourself!"

She wandered back into the dining-room, and thence to the hall, where she stood peering up the stairway at the skylight. "Yes," she continued presently, in a judicial, contemplative tone, "I think it will do very well, on the whole. I am not perfectly sure that the laundress will be satisfied with the arrangement of the laundry, and I don't see exactly, Fred, what you are to do for a dressing-room, when we have more than one visitor. I am out of conceit with the tinting of the drawing-room ceiling, and—and several of the mantelpieces are hideous. But on the other hand, the dining-room is perfectly lovely, there is no end of closet-room, and the kitchen is a gem. Oh, thank you, Fred, thank you ever so much. I really never expected that we could afford to leave the dear old house. It will almost break my heart to leave it, too, although it is so dirty."

Josephine's guns were spiked, as it were. Having declared that the house was ideal, she was barred from utterly blasting it in the next breath. To tell the truth, I felt as a consequence decidedly perky and inclined to perform the

"I was fain to dance with joy."

double shuffle or something of the sort quite out of keeping with the traditional repose of a philosopher. It was so obvious to me that I had escaped weeks, if not months, of misery by the ruse which I had adopted that I was fain to dance with joy. Had I allowed Josephine to pick out a house she would have felt obliged, even though she was thoroughly satisfied with the first she saw, to inspect from top to bottom every other in the market for fear that she might see something which pleased her better and I should have been compelled to accompany her. There are a few advantages after all in being of a philosophic turn of mind.

And here is another bit of philosophy for you which I am thoroughly convinced is sound. A woman adroitly handled will permit her husband to choose a new unfurnished house for her without seri-

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ous demur. But let the lord and master beware who takes it upon himself to do the furnishing also stealthily and of his own accord. I will confess that it did occur to me at first to put through the whole business at one fell swoop—house, wall-papers, dados, chandeliers,

"They're ancestors of mine, love."

carpets, and curtains. I even went so far as to cross the street one day with the intention of asking Poultney Briggs, who makes a business of letting people know what they ought to like in the line of interior decoration, to name his price to complete the job. But my courage failed me at the last minute, for I had a presentiment that Josephine would be disappointed if I did. You see I know her pretty well after all these years.

"I should never have forgiven you, Fred—never!" said my better-half, emphatically, when I told her how near I had come to the crucial act. "I should have hated everything. Besides, no one nowadays thinks anything of Poultney Briggs as a decorator. He is terribly behind the times."

I accepted this reproof and the accompanying verdict with becoming meekness. I remember that when we first went to housekeeping, Poultney Briggs was in the van of artistic progress and that no one was to be mentioned in the same breath with him; yet now, apparently, he was of the sere and yellow leaf order, professionally speaking. And I was old fogy enough not to have been aware of it. Clearly, I was not fit to be entrusted with the selection of even a door-mat, to say nothing of the wall-papers and carpets. It was with a thankful heart over my foresight that I relinquished to Josephine the whole task of furnishing, with the sole reservation that I should have my say about the wine-cellar. My only revenge, a miserable one forsooth, was that she resembled a skeleton three months later; a pale, pitiful bag of bones, though proud and radiant withal. Had it not been for that prediction that her life was to be lengthened, I should have felt anxious. What a marvellous creation a woman is to be sure! Man and philosopher as I am, my impulse would have been to consign the contents of the garret to the auctioneer or the ash-man and to retain most of the least-used furniture and upholstery to eke out our new splendor. But Josephine's method was distinctly opposite. She was critical of nearly everything respectable looking in the old house; on the other hand, there was scarcely anything in the attic or lumber room where our useless things were stored which did not turn out to be a treasure and just the thing for the new establishment. To begin with, there was a love of a set of andirons and a brass fender (to reproduce Josephine's description exactly), which had been discarded at the time we began housekeeping as too old-fashioned and peculiar. Of equal import was a disreputable looking mahogany desk with brass handles and claw feet which had belonged to my great-grandmother before it was banished to the garret within a month after our wedding ceremony, on the plea that none of the drawers would work. They don't still, for that matter. A cumbersome, stately Dutch clock and a toast-rack of what Josephine styled mediæval pattern were among the other discoveries. The latter was reposing in a soap-box in company with a battered, vulgar nutmeg-grater. But the pieces of resistance, as I called them on account of the difficulty we had in moving them from behind a pile of old window-blinds, were the portraits of a little gentleman in smallclothes, with his hair in a cue and a seeming cast in one eye, and a stout

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lady with a high complexion and corkscrew ringlets.

"Oh, Fred, who are they?" cried Josephine, ecstatically, and she began to dust the seedy, frameless canvasses with a reverential air. "Where did they come from?"

"They're ancestors of mine, love."

"Ancestors? How lovely, Fred! I didn't know you had any. I mean I didn't know you had any who had their portraits painted."

"On the contrary, Josephine, I told you who they were when we were engaged and I remember I was rather anxious to hang them in the dining-room, but you said they were a pair of old frumps and that you wouldn't give them house space. So we compromised on the attic."

"Did I?" said my darling, gravely. "Well it must have been because the dining-room was too small for them. They will look delightfully in our new one, when they are mounted and touched up a bit, and they will set off our Copley of my great-aunt in the turban. What are their names? They must have names."

"They are my great-grandfather Plunkett and his wife on my father's side. He was a common hangman."

"Now don't be idiotic, Fred."

"He was, my dear. It was you yourself who said it. Don't you remember my calling two of your forbears a precious pair of donkeys because they wouldn't eat any form of shell-fish, and your replying that, though I was in the habit of grandiloquently describing my ancestor who used to execute people as 'the sheriff of the county,' he was only a common hangman?"

"Oh, was that the man? All I said was that if he had been *my* ancestor instead of yours, you would have called him a hangman. He *was* sheriff of the county, wasn't he, dear?"

"So I have been taught to believe."

"'My ancestor, the high sheriff,' won't sound badly at all," she said, jauntily.

"Especially if we can tone up the old gentleman's game eye a little."

Josephine's face expressed open admiration. "You are a genius and a duck," she exclaimed; then, after a reflective pause, she murmured, "Very likely he met with an accident just before he was painted."

"Yes, dear. Consequently, if the eye can't be improved by means of the best modern artistic talent, the least we can do is to put a shade over it."

This waggish remark seemed to be lost on Josephine. She wore a far-away look as though her thoughts were following some fancy which had appealed to her. She did not deign to take me into her confidence at the moment, but a fortnight later I happened to come upon her in close confabulation with a very clever, rising local artist over this same portrait of my great-grandfather Plunkett.

"Fred," she said, nonchalantly, "Mr. Binkey thinks he can do something to this which will improve it."

"Oh, but he never could have looked like that."

"I shouldn't suppose that it was easy to improve upon nature," I remarked oracularly.

Josephine blushed a little, but she replied, with sturdy decision, "Oh, but he never could have looked like that. His eyes must have been alike, Fred. Mustn't they, Mr. Binkey?"

"I should imagine," said our rising local artist, with a meditative squint at the picture, "that the fault was in the

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technique rather than in the subject matter of the portrait."

"Precisely," said Josephine, triumphantly. "Besides, Mr. Binkey says it needs varnishing."

"I have heard her call the attention of visitors to the strong similarity."

What can one say in the teeth of professional authority? When great-grandfather and great-grandmother Plunkett came back to us at the end of a month they were newly varnished and in bright, tasteful frames, and no one would ever have detected that the old gentleman's eyes did not resemble each other closely. Since then I have often heard Josephine declare her gratitude that she did not allow my squeamishness to prevent her from giving the children and people generally the correct impression of a man who was eminent in his day and generation. Indeed, I have heard her call the attention of visitors to the strong similarity about the brow and eyes which our second son David bears to his great-grandfather, High Sheriff Plunkett, and I do not question in the least that she believes the cast in the old gentleman's optic never to have existed save in the original portrait painter's imagination. I must admit that, notwithstanding the changes made by local talent in my ancestor's physiognomy, I am occasionally struck myself with the strong resemblance specified by Josephine; and the longer I live the less doubt I have that she is a far cleverer person than your humble servant.

(To be continued.)

TO-MORROW.

By W. G. van Tassel Sutphen.

WHERE the sea meets with the river
She stands and looks out afar;
In her eyes a light that ever
Changeth as doth a star,
On her lips the sudden shiver
Of waves on a hidden bar.

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THE HAUNT OF THE PLATYPUS.

By Sidney Dickinson.

DOWN in Gippsland, the cheerfullest district of Victoria, where ridges clothed with variegated forests send down perennial streams to refresh the flocks and herds that sprinkle the broad, tree-studded plains, the river Avon winds leisurely into Lake Wellington between league-long ranks of bristling reeds. The current is almost imperceptible, save in flood-time, when the melting snows at its source swell the tide into a muddy current that overflows for miles the flat country through which it twists and turns. Its banks are steep and clayey, and its color, showing reflections from the muddy bottom, and stained with the astringent juice of gum and wattle, is of a ruddy brown, in which are seen glints of gold when the surface is ruffled by the wind. Here and there the banks have given way, and half-sunken trees catching in their branches the débris and silt of many floods — a favorite perch for basking cormorants — have helped to form deep pools and slow eddies, wherein the matted leaves of glistening water-plants cluster, spreading over the surface a screen much loved by lurking blackfish, and affording cover to the lairs of the water-rat and the Platypus.

The massive boles of ancient eucalypti, still showing the long, elliptical scars where some far-away aboriginal, with flint tomahawk and wedges, stripped off the bark to make his rude canoe, lean far over the water from either bank, and, nearly meeting in mid-current, cast a deeper shadow upon the opacity of the stream: above everything broods a strange half-twilight, friendly to all the semi-nocturnal animals and birds that form so large a part of Australia's remarkable *fauna*. Here, on moonlight nights, the 'possums may be found foraging amid the branches of the she-oaks — those weird plants which, even in the hot noontides, when the wind cannot be felt upon the cheek, repeat in their vibrating leaves a murmur like the distant roar of the sea — and the striped and spotted native cats conducting their sinister hunt for drowsy birds. Here the bittern booms in the sedges, and the "Mopoke," or giant night-jar, swooping on noiseless wing, utters its ghostly complaint in the very ear of the startled fisherman as he watches his dim float for the bite of the huge eels that glide sluggishly over the muddy bottom. In the daytime the tree-tops are a-flutter with the brilliant wings of parrots and lorrykeets, whose splendid tints look cheap in cage or cabinet when compared with their harmonious contrasts to the dull crimson and ashy green of the gum leaves. Cockatoos with sulphur-yellow crests stream overhead, looking like old ivory carvings against the blue as the sunlight strikes through their plumage, and the call of the black swan — a "honk" like that of the migrating American wild-goose, but more trumpet-like and sonorous — floats down from a trailing, smoke-like line so high in air as to be almost invisible, as it drifts slowly toward the sedges of Lake Wellington. A flash of mingled blue, orange, and red, duplicated by reflection in the water, shows where the lovely azure kingfisher has darted by, and, following his flight down the umbrageous tunnel into the sunlight beyond, you see in the yellow reeds the gleam of the paradise warbler's sapphire and turquoise plumage, and the glistening purple back, and carmine legs and beak, of the porphyry coot, as he paddles for snails and worms amid the tangle of water-weeds.

Amid such surroundings and associations the Platypus establishes his domain — himself the strangest of many strange neighbors. For unknown ages he and his kind have led here their quiet and inoffensive lives, undisturbed by any natural enemies, and, until modern luxury discovered in their skins a means of artificial decoration, knowing no more

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of the innate antagonism of man toward the inferior orders of the animal kingdom than was to be gained from the occasional thrust of the blackfellow's spear of bone and reed. It is less than a century since the European hunted the Platypus to his lair, the first published account of him having appeared in the *Naturalist's Miscellany* of London, in 1799. It would be interesting to know the effect that was made upon the first discoverer of this animated paradox—than which nature furnishes nothing more anomalous, in its combination of duck-like mandibles and webbed feet (the latter further equipped with spurs like the game-fowl, and claws like the true burrowing quadrupeds), mole-like eyes and otter-like fur, body of musquash, and tail of beaver. One who was addicted to his cups might recognize in the creature merely the figment of an alcoholized brain, and an artist regard him as the prototype of one or another of those uncanny monsters which sprawl upon the floor of St. Anthony's cave in Teniers's bizarre pictures of the temptation of that holy character. Our earliest, and, in fact, almost our sole accounts of the Platypus are confined to bald and literal descriptions of his appearance and habitat, from which we learn that he is confined to Tasmania and the southern districts of Australia; and, although his race has been thought to embrace two or three species, it is now generally agreed to consist of only one.

You may repair many times to the favorite haunt of the Platypus before you see him, and to discover the retreat to which he modestly retires on observing your presence is a task impossible, except by accident, to any other than a blackfellow. To these cunning hunters, however, there are no secrets of beast or bird; their unerring instinct tells them when the Platypus, diving near the edge of the stream, is in quest of food, or when he is seeking the submerged entrance to his burrow; and they will advise you either where to point your gun in expectation of the animal's reappearance, or where to dig in the bank in confidence of striking the grass-lined nest wherein he dwells and rears his remarkable family. Often, when preparing to fire at the ripple which marked the progress of a Platypus in mid-stream, my aboriginal guide would dissuade me, and, pointing to a gentle swirl under the bank near by, say: "Too far. You wait. He dive by'm-by, come up there"—and the event was invariably as foretold. Shooting Platypus is not so easy as the sluggish, sleepy look of the animal might lead one to suppose, and the novice will waste many cartridges before he secures his first specimen. The Platypus swims low in the water, paddling gently with his pliant feet, and showing above the surface only his shining black bill, and a trace of the fur on his back, which on land glistens like satin, but in the river looks as loose and sodden as that of a drowned kitten. Joined to the inconspicuousness of his appearance is his agility in diving; like the grebe and musk-duck, which share his aqueous home, he will often disappear at the flash of a gun, and leave the shot to tear up the water at the spot where he has gone down. The grebe and musk-duck, compelled to rise again for air, may be secured by rapid and continuous firing, but one shot at a Platypus is all that is allowed, since it makes for the shelter of the bank at once, and may not venture forth again for hours. His method of diving, however, is occasionally fatal. He does not sink deftly, like the wily water-rat, leaving only a ripple behind, but dashes down, head-foremost, in a splashing, half-somersault, in which the rushing shot sometimes catches him midway, and leaves him rocking on the waves, which his motions and the shower of lead have joined to occasion.

At the best, Platypus hunting requires as quick an eye and hand as shooting woodcock in close cover, for the animal rarely stays upon the surface more than a second, to take air, and disappears in search of his food, only to rise again in some entirely unexpected quarter. Another difficulty is found in the fact that he seldom ventures from home except during the early morning and late evening twilight, when the shadows on the water make it almost impossible to see him. I once saw one turn up at mid-day, in brilliant

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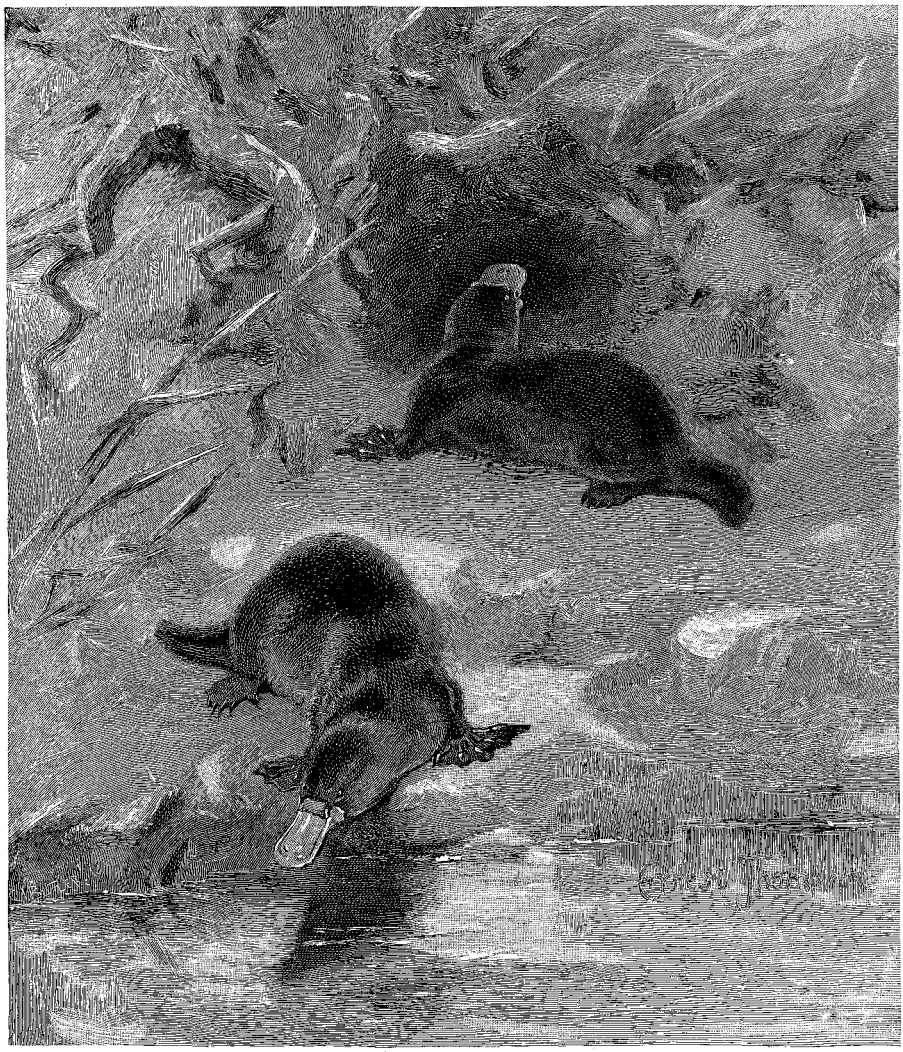

The Platypus.

sunlight, near the boat in which I was sitting, while my companions had started to make a detour through the forest to cut off a pair of black swans that were resting in a bend of the stream—and was so startled by the unexpected sight that I missed him clean, although the opportunity offered one of the very best shots I ever had at a Platypus. I secured the united anathemas of my companions, however, for the swans took a hint from the report of the gun, and were a mile off when the stalkers came out upon the bank near the point where they had been floating. In times of flood the Platypus doubtless drowned out of the burrow, may be seen floating about at almost any hour of the day, but, ordinarily, he is nocturnal in his habits and spends the hours of sunlight in modest seclusion. A certain amount of light, however, seems essential to his complete enjoyment, and he is most active on moonlight nights, when ripples of silver traced across the deep reaches of the stream show his progress in pursuit of the worms and aquatic insects which chiefly compose his bill of fare. In this quest he sometimes falls afoul of the

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night lines baited for eels, and is drawn ashore drowned in the morning, while in the mountain streams miners often find him imprisoned in their sluice-boxes, into which he has drifted during his midnight quests, and missed the way of escape. Wholesale slaughter by skin-hunters has nearly destroyed the Platypus in some districts, but at present he is protected throughout the year, and in some favorable localities is found in every bend and hole of river, creek, and brook. His shyness and retiring habits lead many to suppose that his occurrence in Australia is now infrequent, but in point of fact he is one of the commonest native residents of the country. His fur, of rich, soft brown, in parts like that of the otter, in others like that of the seal, and sometimes beautifully streaked with black and gray, is in much request for muffs and shoulder-capes, and the possessor of a rug made of picked hides may congratulate himself on having a unique and almost priceless treasure. Luxurious loungers find a pleasant warmth in slippers made from his pelt, and Platypus shopping-bags and purses are not disdained by the fair who crowd the marts of Bourke and Collins Streets, in Melbourne, or of Pitt and George, in Sydney. As for the flesh, it is much esteemed by the blackfellow, who pronounces it "budgeree"—good—and manifests a watery lip and shining eye when the young Platypus is digged from its burrow. Civilized tastes are not often influenced by this opinion of native epicures, which, indeed, is equally favorable toward many articles of diet whose mere recital would give indigestion to the Caucasian.

To watch the Platypus feeding, or disporting himself among the still waters of secluded pools or silent river-reaches, is one of the pleasantest experiences of Australia. You select a cloudy, late afternoon, steal up stealthily amid the thick grasses on the bank (keeping a wary eye at your feet on reasonable chance of disturbing a sleepy tiger-snake or two), and, having secured a favorable position to command the stretch of oily water, stand immovable, and look about you. A long time may be spent before you see the object of your visit, and you may even conclude that the Platypus has been indifferent to the locality, favorable as it appears for his habitat with its abrupt shore, and its shallow waters thickly set with sheaves of bulrushes and mottled with the oval, shining leaves of aquatic plants. On the other side of the pool, however, may be seen at intervals a series of gently-spreading circles, which might be caused by bubbles sent up by the fish feeding below. They show where the Platypus is expelling the exhausted air from his lungs preparatory to inhaling a fresh supply; and if you look closely, you may see something that looks like a bit of black stick protruding about two inches above the surface, and strangely gliding about as if impelled by a volition of its own. This is the bill of the foraging Platypus—which now moves toward you across the stream until you can see beneath it the bright, beady eyes of the animal, and the movement of his webbed forefeet as he paddles silently through the water. Stand still now, as if carved in stone, enduring as well as you can the sting of mosquitoes and the explorations of flies into the corners of your eyes—both these being inevitable accompaniments to the study of Australian natural history—for the sight and hearing of the Platypus are alike keen, and the slightest movement will be the signal for his immediate disappearance, and the consequent deferment of your investigations for the day.

As he approaches, his course is marked by a series of watery rings like those you had observed among the rushes opposite, and you can see the bubbles expelled from his nostrils, and the raising of his head a little as he sucks in a new draught of air. He presents a singular appearance, with his duck-like bill and feet alone visible as he comes directly toward the shore; then a tuft of water-grass attracts him, and he turns to it rapidly, when you see the curve of his back, his posterior pair of paddles, and his short, flattened tail, which acts as a flexible rudder to change his course. Clinging to the grass are some diminutive water-snails, which he strips off just as a duck would do, by drawing the blades through his beak, and swallows

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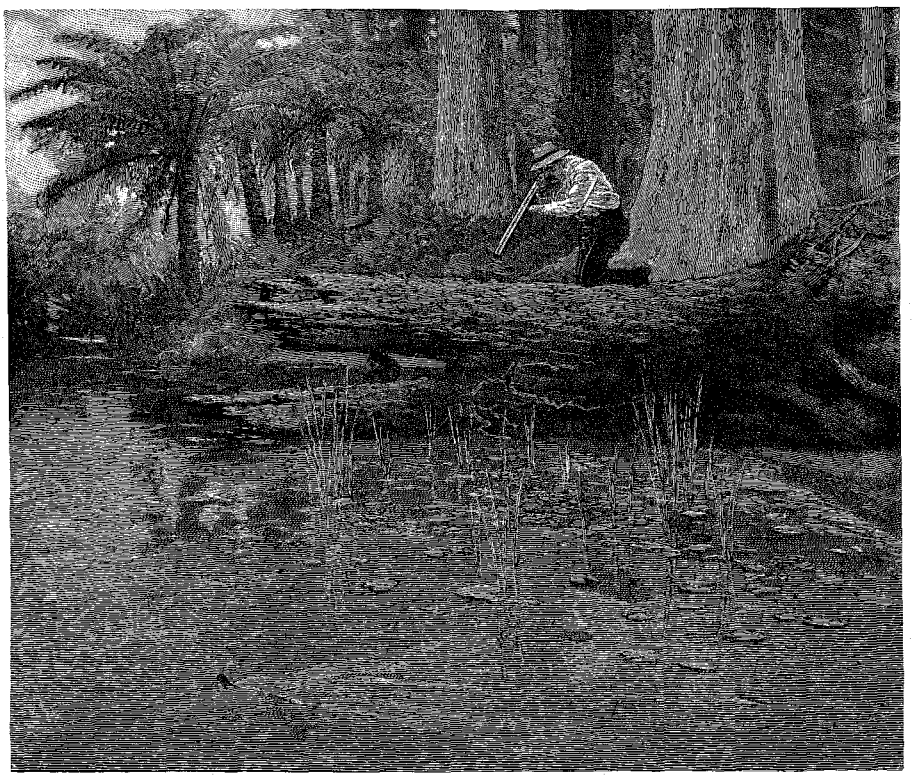

Shooting a Platypus.

with dabbling movements of his mandibles so bird-like that you expect to hear him quack. His hunting is noiseless, however, and the next moment he disappears beneath the surface by a rolling, headlong plunge, his tail slapping the water as he goes down, quite after the manner of the beaver. He is up again in a minute from his pursuit of worm or water-spider, and, apparently satiated with food, he floats about more lightly than before, his entire head and the most of his back appearing above the water, and being followed by a light wake not noticeable during his moments of hunting. Near by, the half-burnt trunk of a ring-barked gum-tree (relic of the forest which once girdled the pool, but has now almost completely disappeared before the axe and fire of the settler) has fallen into the water, its roots resting on the shore—to which the Platypus swims, and, crawling just above the water's edge with his sharp claws in a slow, sprawling way, turns his tail shoreward and lies so flat along the wood that he seems but a knot upon it. Here, after a few moments of rest and careful scrutiny of his surroundings, he begins his toilet, combing his fur from nose to tail with his claws, and smoothing it with his beak as a duck dresses her feathers, until it shines like satin. Then he lays his head down on the log, looking in this attitude something like a hairy mud-turtle, and apparently sinks into slumber. Apparently only—a particularly persistent fly, bent on exploring your nostril, causes you to raise your hand to brush it away; there is a splash, the log is tenantless, and a widening ring upon the surface is the only visible evidence of the vanished Platypus.

He will not appear again, and if we wish to make his further aquaintance we must look for his burrow, which is somewhere about in the bank, covered with a thick thatch of matted grasses. Left to ourselves the search would be a long one, and probably fruitless; but

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our native guide, "Tommy," who has brought us to the spot from the station through paddocks filled with fat sheep, and "mobs" of wiry, wild-looking cattle, has noted the course the Platypus took when leaving the stump, and has a notion as to the whereabouts of his residence. After some keen-eyed investigation and critical examination of the water's edge, where the scratch of a claw, or the mark of a trowel-shaped tail in the mud, might indicate a landing-place, he finds, covered with the long, pendent shore-grass, a hole in the bank, a few inches above the margin of the pool. "Mullangong (Platypus) there," says "Tommy," and producing a spade, which he has brought in case of emergencies like this, walks inland about a dozen feet from the mouth of the burrow, and begins to sink a perpendicular shaft, after the fashion of a prospector who wishes to test the direction of a lode. At the depth of a couple of feet he strikes the tunnel, and, noting that its direction is unchanged, although its course may be slightly serpentine, goes back ten feet further and sinks again. The burrow may thus be traced from twenty to thirty, or even fifty feet, for the Platypus is an accomplished excavator, and with his strong claws, which, when brought together to protect the connecting membrane, are as well adapted for digging as those of the mole, makes light of the resistance that is offered even by the stiffest of clayey soils. In this case "Tommy" finds, through some evidence visible only to himself, that his second shaft has touched a point very near the extremity of the burrow, and therefore begins to dig horizontally, and in a few minutes opens up the home of the Platypus, wherein himself, his wife, and two diminutive, fat, and pretty copies of themselves are huddled palpitatingly together. The female is attenuated, ruffled, and mangy from the cares of nursing, and somewhat smaller than her consort, who is sleek and glossy and a splendid specimen of his kind. Both kick and scratch when taken up, and make a curious, growling noise like young puppies; the eyes of the male shine viciously, and he makes good play with the long, amber-colored spurs which project inward and backward above his posterior pair of webbed feet, and whose scratch "Tommy" warns us to avoid, as "them b'long poison, alla same snake." They are, indeed, hollow, as if conveying from internal glands some noxious fluid, but that a wound from them would be serious I much doubt, never having heard of anyone being injured by them. The curious beak is evidently very sensitive —the animal, on being set upon the ground and stroked gently by the hand, becomes quiet, as if experiencing a pleasurable sensation; but a slight tap on the beak causes him to manifest every sign of pain and anger. The young ones, manifestly full of food, remain lethargic, rolled up in a ball with beaks and tails touching, their forefeet brought together above their heads, and their hind-legs doubled up under them—queer, furry lumps of fatness which bring the fires of appetite into the eyes of the blackfellow. The home of this queer family is contained in a circular cavity about two feet broad and a foot high, at the end of the burrow, and a foot and a half below the surface of the soil, lined with dry grass and river weeds, and forming a cosy nest some dozen feet above the water-level, to which the burrow slopes gently.

Naturalists have finally settled definitely the fact that the Platypus, while a true mammal and suckling its young, lays eggs — which are not furnished with a calcareous shell, like those of birds, but have a cartilaginous envelope, like those of the snake or turtle. The eminent English naturalist, Sir Richard Owen, first demonstrated the mammalian character of the Platypus by the discovery of lacteal glands in the breast of the female, although his statement was combated by many, who declared that an animal which was furnished with such a long, horny beak would be quite incapable of suckling. Discoveries of the young, soon after birth, have demonstrated the futility of this objection, since the mandibles of the new-born Platypus are as soft and flexible as the lips of other animals, and equally well furnished with the sensitive nerves of taste and touch. It was long after the mammalian nature of the

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Platypus was demonstrated that its egg-producing habit was known—a habit which is now confirmed by the experience of several independent observers. The most conclusive testimony that I have obtained upon this point is from the Rev. Mr. Hagenauar, Secretary to the Victorian Board for the Protection of Aboriginals, and Director of the Native Mission Station of Ramahyuk, which is situated on the Avon River above described. He has made an exhaustive study of the Platypus, and for many years has sent to collectors in all parts of the world specimens of the animal in every stage of development. Only once, however, has he discovered the eggs, which were found on that occasion in a burrow that he and his blackfellows had excavated. Both the male and female were in the grass-lined chamber, upon the floor of which were two pulpy eggs, enclosed in a pliable skin-like covering of a dull-white color, which had evidently been very recently deposited. Almost immediately upon their discovery the eggs burst open, revealing the enclosed young, which were quite naked and sightless, flesh-colored, and imperfectly formed. They were, however, more fully developed than are the young of the kangaroo, opossum, and other marsupial animals, which for weeks after birth appear more like worms than quadrupeds, but nevertheless suggested very forcibly the inferiority of type which shows the Platypus to belong almost to the lowest order of mammals. This discovery seems to show that the production of the egg and the emergence of the infant Platypus from it are nearly simultaneous, and explains why, in spite of the numerous burrows that have been opened, there are almost no instances of complete eggs being found. The study of the inferior and archaic forms of animal life, which the Platypus and the enormous variety of Australian marsupials afford, has only just begun, and offers many curious problems to the naturalist.

DE PROFUNDIS.

By Anne Reeve Aldrich.

I CANNOT understand. I asked no meed
Of gold; no greater radiance than a smile
To light my life. And looking in,
I see some childish faults, but no deep guile
That God should choose to smite me with His wrath,
To make me feel his strong and mighty hand.
What have I done, O God, to suffer thus.
What have I done? I cannot understand!

I cannot understand, and so meanwhile
I will be still, and will not question Him.
And will not seek the less to see His face,
Because through tears my eyes are very dim,
And in the Hand that chose to chasten me
I will slip trustfully my feeble hand.
For Faith can still cry out in blackest night,
All's well with me, I need not understand.

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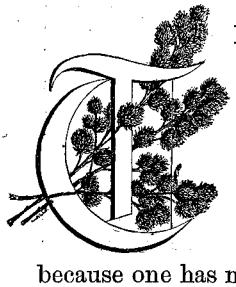
THE ONE I KNEW THE BEST OF ALL.

A MEMORY OF THE MIND OF A CHILD.

By Frances Hodgson Burnett.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DRYAD DAYS.



THERE were many of them so beautiful—so newly, strangely beautiful—that words seem poor things to try and describe them with. Words are always poor things. One only uses them because one has nothing else. There is a wide, wide distance—a distance which is more than a matter of mere space—between a great murky, slaving, manufacturing town in England, and mountains and forests in Tennessee—forests which seem endlessly deep, mountains covered with their depths of greenness, their pines and laurels, swaying and blooming, vines of wild grape and scarlet trumpet-flower swaying and blooming among them, tangled with the branches of sumach and sassafras, and all things with branches held out to be climbed over and clung to and draped.

To have lived under the shadow of the factory chimneys, to have looked up at the great, soft, white clouds and fleecy, floating islands, always seeing them somewhat tarnished, as it were, with the yellowness of the chimney-smoke, to have picked one's daisies and buttercups in the public park, *always* slightly soiled with the tiny dots of black—the soft drift of "smuts" which never ceased falling—all this is an excellent preparation for rapture, when one is brought face to face with Dryad haunts, and may live Dryad days.

After the passing of the years in the Back Garden of Eden the Small Person had always been so accustomed to the ever-falling little rain of "smuts" that it had become an accepted feature of existence. They fell upon one's features, and one of the gentle offices of courtesy was to remove them from beloved and intimate cheeks or noses, and delicately direct the attention of mere acquaintances to their presence and exact situation. They made spots upon one's hat-ribbons, and disfigured one's best frock, and it occurred to no one to touch anything or rest against it without previous examination. In fact, one was so accustomed to their presence that the thought of resenting it rarely intruded itself, and one scarcely realized that there existed people who were not so rained upon. The Small Person had always felt it sad, however, that the snow—even the pure, untrodden, early morning snow—was spoiled so soon by the finer snow of black which fell upon its fair surface and speckled it. One of the most exciting nursery experiments in winter had been to put a cupful of milk, sweetened with nursery brown sugar, onto the window-sill outside, with the thrilling expectation that it would freeze and become ice-cream. This was always tried when it snowed—and one could get the milk and sugar; but as Manchester weather was rarely very cold, the mixture never froze, and if it had done so, it would never have become ice-cream, or anything more nearly resembling it than pale-blue skimmed milk and brown sugar would make. There had been rare occasions when a thin coating of ice had formed upon the top of the preparation, and been devoured with joy—but it usually remained in a painfully sloppy condition, and was covered with a powder of fine soot. And when in despair one took it in and disposed of it with a spoon, with an effort to regard it as a luxury, because *if* it had frozen it *would* have been ice-cream—the flavor of smoke in it was always its strongest feature. This was an actual trial to the Small Person, because it interfered with the pretence that it was ice-cream. It really was so horribly smoky. Every-

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thing had been more or less smoky all through her childhood. And she had had an absolute passion for the country. She adored the stories in which people had parks or gardens, or lived in rustic cottages, or walked in forests, or across moors, or climbed "blue hills." She revelled in the thoughts of bluebells and honeysuckles, and harebells and wild roses. She "pretended" them in the Square itself. And this, by the way, recalls a thrilling incident which is perhaps sufficiently illustrative to be worth recording.

One or two of the large vacant houses —perhaps all of them— had once had large gardens behind them. Years of neglect and factory chimney smoke had transformed them into cindery deserts, where weeds grew rank in patches where anything could grow at all, and where, despite the high brick walls surrounding them, all sorts of rubbish accumulated, and made both weeds and bareness more hideous, and their desolateness more complete. Usually the doors of entrance were kept locked, and there was no opportunity of even looking in from the outside. This fact the Small Person had always found enchanting, because it suggested mystery. So long as one could not cross the threshold, one could imagine all sorts of beautifulness hidden by the walls too high to be looked over, the little green door which was never unclosed. It made her wish so that she could get inside.

For years she never did so, but at last there came a rumor that the big houses were to be pulled down, to make room for smaller ones, and then it was whispered about among the Square children that the little green door in the high wall which surrounded the garden behind the big house, called for some mysterious reason "Page's Hall," had been opened, and some bold spirit had walked in and even walked out again.

And so there arrived an eventful hour when the Small Person herself went in —passed through the enchanted door and stood within the mysterious precincts looking around her.

If she had seen it as it really was she would probably have turned and fled. But she did not—she saw nothing as it was—*Grâce au Bon Dieu!* She saw a Garden. At least it had been a Garden *once* — and there were the high brick walls around it—and the little door so long unopened, and *once* there had been flowers and trees in it; they had really bloomed and been green and shady there, though it was so long ago. The charming treasure of her life had been the story that once the Square itself had been an ornamental lake with swans and lilies in it.

So she wandered about in a dream —"pretending." That changed it all. The heaps of earth and rubbish were mounds of flowers, the rough, coarse docks were lilies with broad leaves, every poor green thing struggling for life in the hard earth had a lovely name. They were green things at least, and she loved them for that. They *grew*— just as real flowers might have done—in a place which had once been a Garden.

All her little life she had felt a sort of curious kinship with things which grew —the trodden grass in the public park, the soiled daisies and buttercups. She had lived among her bricks and mortar and smoke with the yearnings of a little Dryad underlying all her pleasures. In the Square real trees and flowers and thick green ferns and grass seemed joys so impossible.

She walked about slowly. "Pretending" with all her power. She bent down and looked the weeds in their faces and touched them tenderly. They were such poor things, but in some places they grew quite thickly together and covered the ugly barrenness of the earth with a coarse, simple greenery which represented vaguely to her mind something which was quite beautiful. She felt grateful to them.

"Suppose they were roses and pansies and lilies and violets," she said to herself. "How beautiful it would be!"

And then her dear Angel—the beloved Story—laid its kind, beautiful hand upon her, and as she stood among the docks and thistles, if an older person could have looked on—understanding— surely he would have seen light and color and glow come into her child face.

"You *are* roses!" she said. "You *are* violets — and lilies — and hyacinths

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and daffodils and snowdrops! You *are!*"

She had reached a mound and was standing on it. Beside it, and between herself and the garden wall, there was a sort of broad, deep ditch which seemed to have no reason for existence and offered no explanation of itself. The mound had probably been formed by the piling up of the earth and rubbish dug out and thrown up. The green things grew over the mound and were rank even in the ditch itself, scrambling down its ugly sides and half-filling it. She looked into this ditch and was pleased with it.

"This is the castle Moat," she said. "It is a Moat—and these are the castle gardens."

The Moat enraptured her. It made all things possible. She rambled about building around it.

"There is a Bower here," she said, in the very low voice she reserved for such occasions. "It is a Bower covered with roses. There are a great many trees—great big trees with thick trunks and broad, broad branches. There are oaks and beeches and chestnut-trees and they spread their boughs across the avenues from side to side. There are Avenues. They are arched over with green. There are banks and banks of flowers—banks of primroses and banks of violets." She was always lavish. "There are bluebells—and thick green grass and emerald velvet moss, and ferns and ferns. There are fountains and Grottoes—and everything is *carpeted* with flowers."

It was all as abundant as Edith Somerville's hair.

And the Garden—the long dead Garden—the poor old, forgotten, deserted Garden! Did it know that suddenly it had bloomed again—as it had never bloomed before, even half a century ago in its palmiest days?

It would be beautiful to believe that it did, and that some strange, lovely struggle and thrill so moved it, that Nature herself helped it to one last effort to live—expressing itself in a mysterious and wonderful thing. If this was not so, how did a flower grow there?

It seemed wonderful to the Small Person—though it was such a tiny thing—such a common thing in some places that there are country-bred people who would not have stooped to pick it up. But she had never seen one.

She was bending over the green things on the mound and telling them again that they were flowers—when she saw a tiny red speck close to the ground.

It was scarcely more than a speck—and a flower was such a wildly improbable thing that she could not believe her eyes.

"It's a *flower!*" she gasped. "A tiny red thing! and she knelt among the weeds and gloated on it. It's a real flower!" she said, "*growing!*"

She did not know what it was. She took it up as if it had been a holy thing. Only a little Dryad, who had spent her life in the Square looking out at the slates for rain, could have felt as she did. She looked at it closer and closer, and then remembered something she had read in some poem of rural scenes, the name of some little thing which was tiny and red, and grew low and close to the earth. It did not really matter whether she was quite right or not—she could not know—but she loved the name and hoped it was the real one.

"It is a Pimpernel," she said, "a scarlet Pimpernel. It must be!" And she ended with a wild little shout to the other children who were exploring within hail.

"Come here!" she cried. "Come here, and see what I have found. I have found a Pimpernel—a scarlet Pimpernel like those that grow in the fields!"

. . . . . .

And from a life where a growing green thing was a marvel and a mystery, and a pimpernel an incongruous impossibility, she went into the Dryad days. They began with a journey of two weeks after land was reached, with the banks of the St. Lawrence, with days of travel through Canadian forests, with speechless, rapt wanderings on the borders of a lake like a sea, with short rests at cities which seemed new and foreign, though they were populated with people who spoke English, and which ended at last in a curious little village—one unpaved street of wooden houses, some painted white and some made of logs, but with trees everywhere, and forests and hills shutting it in from the world.

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Then she *lived* in the Story. Quiet English people, who, driven by changes of fortune, wandered thousands of miles and lived without servants in a log-cabin, were a Story themselves. The part of the house which was built of logs enchanted her. It was quite like Fenimore Cooper, but that there were no Indians. She yearned inexpressibly for the Indians. There must have been Indians some time, and there must be some left in the forests. This was what she hoped and tried to find out about. It is possible her inquiries into the subject sometimes rather mystified the owners of the white wooden houses, to whom Indians seemed less thrilling. Occasionally an Indian or two were seen she found, but they were neither blood-thirsty nor majestic. They did not build wigwams in the forests, or wear moccasins and wampum; they did not say "The words of the Pale Face make warm the heart of the White Eagle."

"They gener'ly come a beggin' somepn good to eat," one of the white house-owners said to her. "Vittles, or a chaw er terbacker or a dram er whiskey is what *they're* arter. An' he'll lie *an'* steal, a Injun will, as long as he's a Injun. I haint no use for a Injun."

This was not like Fenimore Cooper, but she persuaded herself that the people she questioned had not chanced to meet the right kind of Aborigine. She preferred Fenimore Cooper's, even when he wore his war-paint and was scalping the Pale Face—or rather pursuing him with that intent without attaining his object. She delighted in conversation with the natives—the real native, who had a wonderful dialect. As she had learned to speak Lancashire she learned to speak East Tennessean and North Carolinian and the negro dialect. Finding that her English accent was considered queer she endeavored to correct it and to speak American. She found American interesting and rather liked it. That was part of the Story, too. To use, herself, in casual conversation, the expressions she had heard in American stories related with delight in England was a joy. She used to wonder what the aunts and cousins and the people in the Square would think if they heard her say "I guess," and "I reckon," if they would be shocked or if they would think it amusing.

The Square—the wet, shiny slates—the soiled clouds and falling soot seemed more than thousands of miles away—it was as if they could scarcely have been real, as if she must have dreamed them. Because she was really a Dryad she felt no strangeness in the great change in her life. It seemed as if she must always have lived with the vast clear space of blue above her, with hundreds of miles of forests surrounding her, with hills on every side, with that view of a certain far-off purple mountain behind which the sun set after it had painted such splendors in the sky. To get up at sunrise and go out into the exquisite freshness and scent of earth and leaves, to wander through the green aisles of tall, broad-leaved, dew-wet Indian corn, whose field sloped upward behind the house to the chestnut-tree which stood just outside the rail-fence one climbed over on to the side of the hill, to climb the hill and wander into the woods where one gathered things, and sniffed the air like some little wild animal, to inhale the odor of warm pines and cedars and fresh damp mould, and pungent aromatic things in the tall "Sage grass," to stand breathing it all in, one's whole being enveloped in the perfume and warm fresh fragrance of it, one's face uplifted to the deep, pure blue and the tops of the pines swaying a little before it—to hear little sounds breaking the stillness when one felt it most—lovely little sounds of birds conversing with each other, asking questions and answering them and sometimes being sweetly petulant, of sudden brief little chatters of squirrels, of lovely languorous cawing of crows high above the tree tops, of the warm-sounding boom and drone of a bee near the ground—strange as it may seem, to do, to feel, to see and hear all this was somehow not new to her. She was not a stranger here—she had been a stranger in the Square when she had lifted her face to the low-hanging, smoky clouds, talking to them, imploring them when they would make no response. Without knowing why — because she was too young to comprehend—she felt that she had begun to be alive, and that before, somehow, she had not been exactly liv-

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ing. Though the poor green things in a smoke and soot-smitten Sahara had moved her and seemed to say something vaguely, though one pimpernel astray through some miracle among the rubbish had made her heart cry aloud, the full bounty of all Nature poured out before her in one magnificent gift seemed to be something she had always known —something she must have been waiting for all through her young years of exile —a native land which she could not have been kept away from always. And the most perfectly rapturous of her moments always brought to her a feeling that somehow—in some subtle way—she was part of it—part of the trees, of the warm winds and scents and sounds and grasses. This—though she had not reached the point of knowing it—was because ages before—dim, far-off beautiful ages before, she had been a little Faun or Dryad—or perhaps a swaying thing of boughs and leaves herself, but this had been when there had been fair pagan gods and goddesses who found the fair earth beautiful enough for deity itself. And some strange force had reincarnated her in the Square.

It is worth mention, perhaps, that here she ceased to "pretend" in the old way. There was no need to "pretend." There were real things enough. She had laid the Doll aside reluctantly some time before—doing it gradually—after some effort at being purely maternal with it, which, after some tentative experiment, was a failure, because she so loved the real, warm babies that to hover over a wax one seemed an insult to her being. She lived in the woods, and she wrote stories on slates and pieces of paper. But the Story took a new tone. Sir Marmaduke Maxwelton was less prominent, and the hair of Edith Somerville flowed less freely over the pages. Hair and eyes seemed less satisfying and less necessary. She began to deal with emotions. She found emotions interesting —and forests and Autumn leaves assisted them and seemed part of them somehow, as she was part of the forests themselves. In the Square she had imagined—in the forests she began to feel.

She lived in the village long enough to gain a great deal of atmosphere, and then she went with the family to another place. The new home was not very far away from the first one, and though it was within a few miles of a place large enough to be called a town, instead of a village, it was even more sylvan. This time the house was a little white one and she did not deplore its not being built of logs, because she had lived beyond the Fenimore Cooper standpoint and expected neither Indians nor bears. She no longer regarded America as foreign, and had attained a point of view quite different from that of her early years.

The house was not at the foot of a hill, in these days it was at the top of one. It was not a very high hill, and the house was a tiny one, balanced quaintly on the summit, as if some flood had left it there on receding.

"Noah's Ark was left like it on Mount Ararat," said the Small Person. "Let us call it Noah's Ark, Mount Ararat. Think how queer it will look on letters." So it was called Noah's Ark, Mount Ararat, and the address *did* look queer on letters.

The house was a bandbox, but the place was adorable in these days. One stood on the little porch of Noah's Ark and looked out over undergrowth and woods and slopes and hills which ended in three ranges of mountains one behind the other. The farthest was the Alleghanies. It was at this place that what were most truly the Dryad days were lived. There were no neighbors but the woods, there was no village, the town was too far away to be visited often by people who must walk. There was nothing to distract one.

And the mountains always seemed to stand silently on guard. They became part of one's life. When the Small Person came out upon the porch very early in the morning they were deep purple and stood out soft and clear. The sun was rising from behind a hill to the left, where three or four very tall pine-trees seemed to have grown with a view to adding to the spectacular effect by outlining their feathery branches and straight, slender stems against the pink, pearl, amber, blue, apple-green, daffodil sky, growing intenser every moment until the golden flood leaped up above the tallest feathered pine. In the middle of the day they paled into faint blue

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in a haze of sunny light and heat, at sunset they were violet with touches of deep rose. The Small Person began to think of them as of human things. They were great human things, with moods which changed and expressions which came and went. She found herself going to look at them at all sorts of times, at different phases of the day or sky, to see how they looked now! They had so many expressions — they always seemed to be saying something — no, *thinking* something — but she did not know what. She would have been glad to understand—but with these too she had that instinct of kinship — of somehow being part of their purple, their clear dark outline, their dips and curves against the sky — with these too! The first morning that she went out and found them covered with snow — like ranges of piled white clouds lightly touched with sunrise pink—she almost cried out aloud!

But it was not only the mountains—all the near things that surrounded and shut her in were of the same world. She began to ramble and explore, wandering about, and led on step by step by the things she saw until it ended in her literally living in the open air.

About a hundred yards from the house was a little thicket which was the beginning of the woods. Sassafras, sumach, dogwood, and young pines and cedars grew in the midst of a thick undergrowth of blackberry-vines and bushes. The slender but full-branched trees stood very close together, and a wild grape-vine roofed them with a tangled abundance.

When she found this place the Small Person hungered to get into the very heart of it and feel the leaves enclose her and the vine sway about her and catch with tendrils at her hair. But that was impossible then, because the briars and undergrowth were so thick as to be impenetrable. For some time it was a longing unattained.

It was a chance, perhaps, which caused it to be fulfilled. Some friend of the brothers, during a visit of some holiday, was inspired to suggest that an hour or so of vigorous cutting and pruning would do wonders for this very spot, and in a valiant moment the idea was carried out.

The Small Person lived in it for two years after, and it was called the "Bower."

The walls of the Bower were branches and bushes and lovely brambles, the ceiling was boughs bearing bravely the weight of the matted vine, the carpet of it was grass and pine-needles, and moss. One made one's way to it through a narrow path cleared between blackberry and wild rose briars, one entered as if through a gateway between two slender sentinel sassafras-trees — and the air one breathed inside smelled of things subtly intoxicating—of warm pine and cedar and grape-vine blossoms made hot by the sun.

The Small Person was never quite sober when she lay full length on the grass and pine-needles on a Summer day and closed her eyes, dilating her little nostrils to inhale and sniff slowly the breathing of these strange sweet things. She was not aware that she was intoxicated, she only thought she was exquisitely happy and uplifted by a strange, still joy—better than anything else in life — something thrillingly near being the Party.

She came to the place so much, and spent so many hours there, lying on the grass, scribbling a bit of a story, sewing a bit of a seam, reading, when she could get a book—which was rarely—thinking out great problems with her eyes open or shut, and she was so quiet that the little living things actually became accustomed to her, and quite unafraid. It became one of her pleasures to lie or sit and watch a bird light upon a low branch quite near her, and sway there, twittering a little to himself and giving an occasional touch to his feathers, as he made remarks about the place. She would not have stirred for worlds for fear of startling him. She used to try to imagine what he was saying:

"Dear me! What a charming place. So delightfully fresh and cool after one has been flying about in the hot sun. And so secluded! Why did not Rosiebeak think of suggesting that I should build the nest here? And none of those big, walking-about creatures who don't sing——"

And then, perhaps, his round, bright, dark eye fell upon her and he made a

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nervous little move, as if he were going to fly away, but seeing that she did not stir, reflected upon her, and then she thought he said:

"What is it? It looks like one of them, but it does not move or make a noise, and its eyes look friendly."

And then he would gather courage, if he was an enterprising bird, and hop onto a nearer twig and examine her, making quick little curious movements with his head and neck. After which he would probably fly away.

But she had an idea that he always came again and brought some member of his family and endeavored to explain her to them and tell them that his impression was that she would not hurt. Many of them, she was quite sure, came again. She believed she recognized them. And they became so used to seeing her that they did not mind her in the least, and had quarrels and reconciliations, and said unpleasant things about their relations, and deplored the habits their children were getting into, and practised their scales just as if she had been one of the family.

Squirrels had no objection to her, rabbits occasionally came and looked, and dragon-flies and beetles regarded her as of no consequence at all.

"They think I am another kind of little animal," she used to delight herself with thinking — "another kind of squirrel or thrush or beetle, or a new kind of rabbit they have not seen. Or perhaps they think I am a very little cow without horns. They don't think I am a person, and they know I like them."

Some mornings she spent there it would be almost impossible to describe. The air, the odors, the sounds of insects and birds, the golden-green shade of the interlaced vines and branches, the delicate shadows of the leaves, the faint rustle of them, which only seemed to make the stillness more still and full of meaning, wakened in her a fine, tender ecstasy, which did not seem to be exactly a feeling belonging to life on earth. She was always alone, and she used to lie in the gold-green shade quite motionless, with her eyes closed, a curious, rapt fancy in her mind.

"Somehow," she used to think, "I am not quite in my body. It is so beautiful that my soul is trying to get away like a bird. It has got out of my body and it is trying to break loose; but it is fastened with a little slender cord, and that holds it. It is fluttering and straining because it wants to fly."

There was even in her mind a perfectly definite idea of how high above her body the little soul hovered, straining to break the cord. She fancied it hovering, with the movement of a poised humming-bird, about a yard above her breast—no higher—the slender chain was only that long.

And she used to try to make herself more and more still, and centre all her thoughts upon the small lifted spirit—trying to help it to break the chain.

"If it could break it," she thought, "it would fly away—I don't know where—and I should be dead. And they would come to the Bower to look for me at night when I did not come home, and find me lying here. And they would think it was dreadful and be so sorry for me; and nobody would know that I had only died because I was so happy that my soul broke the chain."

If in the young all things not quite of earth are justly to be considered morbid, then this ecstasy, too subtile to be called a mood, was a thing to be discouraged; but it was an emotion all of rapture, and was a thing so delicate and strange that she kept it silently to herself.

In the life she spent in wandering about the woods, she became perfectly familiar with all their resources. She was generally gathering flowers. The little house was filled with them to overflowing. Her hands were always filled as she rambled from one place to another. She was always looking for new ones, and it was not long before she knew exactly the spots of earth, of dryness or dampness, of shade or sun, in which each one grew. She was nearly always by herself, but she was never alone when she was among these intimates of hers. She found it quite natural to speak to them, to bend down and say caressing things to them, to stoop and kiss them, to praise them for their pretty ways of looking up at her as into the eyes of a friend and beloved. There were certain little blue violets who al-

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ways seemed to lift up their small faces childishly, as if they were saying :

"Kiss me! Don't go by like that. Kiss me." That was what she imagined about them.

Those were lovely days when she found these violets. They were almost the very first things that came in the Spring. First there was a good deal of rain, and when one was getting very tired of it there would come a lull. Perhaps it was only a lull, and the sun only came out and went in with capricious uncertainty. But when the lull came the Small Person issued forth. Everything was wet and smelled deliciously—the mould, the grass, the ferns, the trees and bushes. She was not afraid of the dampness. She was a strong little thing, and wore cotton frocks. Generally she had no hat. A hat seemed unnecessary and rather in the way. She simply roamed about as a little sheep or cow would have roamed about, going where an odor or a color led her. She went through the bushes and undergrowth, and as she made her way they shook rain-drops on her. As she had not known flowers before, and did not know people then, she did not learn the real names of the flowers she gathered. But she knew their faces and places and ways as she knew her family. The very first small flower of all was a delicate, bounteous thing, which grew in masses and looked like a pale forget-me-not on a fragile stem. She loved it because it was so ready and so free of itself, and it meant that soon the wet grass would be blue with the violets which she loved beyond all else of the Spring or Summer. She always lost her head a little when she saw the first of these small things, but when, after a few days more rain, the sun decided to shine with warm softness, and things were pushing up through the mould and bursting from the branches and trunks of trees, and bluebirds began to sing, and all at once the blue violets seemed to *rush* out of the earth and purple places everywhere, she became a little mad—with a madness which was divine. She forgot she was a Small Person with a body, and scrambled about the woods, forgetting everything else also. She knew nothing but the violets, the buds of things, the leaves, the damp, sweet, fresh smell. She knelt down recklessly on the wet grass ; if rain began to fall she was not driven indoors unless it fell in torrents. To make one's way through a wood on a hillside with hands full of cool, wet leaves and flowers, and to feel soft, light, fresh rain-drops on one's cheek is a joy—a joy !

With the violets came the blossoming of the dogwood trees and the wild plum —things to be broken off in branches and carried away over one's shoulder, like sumptuous fair banners of white bloom. And then the peach- and apple-blossom, and new flowers at one's feet on every side as one walked through paths or made new ones through the woods. As the weather became warmer the colors became warmer with it. Then the early mornings were spent in the flower hunt, the heat of the day in the Bower, the evenings in the woods again, the nights upon the porch, looked down upon by myriads of jewels trembling in the vastness of dark blue, or by a moon, never the same or in the same setting, and always sailing like a boat of pearl in a marvellous, mysterious sea.

The Small Person used to sit upon the steps of the porch, her elbows on her knees, her hands supporting her chin, her face upturned, staring, staring, in the moments of silence. Something of the feeling she had had when she lay upon her back on the grass in the Back Garden of Eden always came back to her when she began to look up at the sky. Though it was so high—so high, so unattainable, yet this too was a world. Was she part of it too, as she was part of the growing things and the world they belonged to ? She was not sure of that, but there was a link somewhere—she was something to it all—somehow ! In some unknown way she counted as *something* among the myriads in the dark, vast blueness — perhaps for as much as a point of the tiniest star. She knew she could not understand, that she was beyond the things understandable, when she had this weird updrawn, overwhelming feeling, and sat with her chin upon her hands and stared—and stared —and stared so fixedly and with such intensity, that the earth seemed gone—left far behind.

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There was not a season of the year, an hour of the day which was not a wonderful and beautiful thing. In the winter there was the snow, the clear, sharp air, which seemed actually to sparkle, the rose and violet shadows on the mountains, the strange, lurid sunsets, with crimsons and scarlets and pale yellows, burning the summits of purple banks of cloud, there was the crisp sound of one's feet treading the hardened snow, the green of the pines looking emerald against the whiteness, the bare tree-tops gray or black against the sky, and making the blue intenser; there were the little brown rabbits appearing with cautious hops, and poised, sniffing with tremulous noses, their large eyes and alert ears alarming them at a breath of sound to a wild skurry and disappearance into space itself. The rabbits were a delightful feature. The Small Person never was able to become intimate with them to the extent of being upon speaking terms. They would come to the Bower and peep at her in the Summer, but in the Winter they always disappeared with that lightning rapidity when they heard her. And yet if they had known her she was conscious that they would have recognized their mistake. She had always deplored seeing them suspended by their hind legs in the poulterers' shops in Manchester. They looked so soft, and their dulled eyes seemed so piteous.

The Spring was the creation of the world—the mysterious, radiant, young beginning of living. There were the violets and dogwood blossoms, and every day new life. In the summer there was the Bower, and the roses, and the bees, and the warm, aromatic smells in the air. In the Autumn a new thing came, and she seemed to have drunk something heady again.

The first Autumn in America was a wondrous thing to her. She existed from day to day in a sort of breathless state of incredulity. In Manchester, the leaves on the trees in the public park, being rained upon until they became sodden and brown, dropped off dispirited, and life was at an end. Even poetry and imaginative prose only spoke of "Autumn's russet brown."

But here marvels happened. After a few hot days and cool nights, the greenery of the Bower began to look strangely golden. As she lay under her prettiest sassafras-tree, the Small Person found, when she looked up, that something was happening to its leaves. They were still fresh, and waved and rustled, but they were turning pale yellow. Some of them had veins and flushes of rose on them. She gathered some and looked at them closely. They were like the petals of flowers. A few more hot days and cool nights and there were other colors. The maple was growing yellow and red, the dogwood was crimson, the sumach was like blood, the chestnut was pale gold, and so was the poplar—the trailing brambles were painted as if with a brush. The Small Person could not believe her eyes, as she saw what, each day, went on around her. It seemed like a brilliant dream, or some exaggeration of her senses.

"It can't really be as scarlet as that when one holds it in one's hand," she used to say at sight of some high-hued, flauntingly lovely spray.

And she would stand upon her tiptoes, and stretch, and struggle to reach it, and stand panting and flushed, but triumphant, with it in her hand, finding it as brilliant as it had seemed.

She began to gather leaves as she had gathered flowers, and went about with bowers of branches, flaming and crimson, in her arms. She made wreaths of sumach and maple leaves, and wore them on her head, and put bunches in her little belt, and roamed about all day in this splendor, feeling flaunting and inclined to sing. Again, she did not know that she was not sober, and that, as Bacchantes of old wore wreaths of vine-leaves and reeled a little with the blood of the new grapes, so she was reeling a little with an exultation beautiful and strange.

There was a certain hollow in a little woodland road she loitered about a great deal, where there was a view which had always a deep effect upon her.

It was not an imposing view, it was a soft and dreamy one. The little road ran between woods and pretty wild

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places, to a higher land clothed with forest. The lovely rolling wave of it seemed to shut in the world she looked at when she stood in the little dip of the road, with wood on both sides and the mountains behind her.

When all the land was aflame with Autumn, and she sat on Indian Summer afternoons upon a certain large lichen-covered log, she used to gaze, dreaming, at the massed tree plumes of scarlet and crimson and gold uplifted against the blue sky, and softened with a faint, ethereal haze, until she had strange unearthly fancies of this too.

"A place might open in the blue," she used to say softly to herself. "It might open at any moment — now — while I am sitting here. And They might come floating over the trees. They would float, and look like faint, white mist at first. And if the place in the blue were left open, I might *see!*"

And at such times all was so *still*—so still and wonderful, that she used to find herself sitting breathless, waiting.

There were many memories of this hollow woodland path. So many flowers grew there, and there were always doves making soft murmurs and most tender, lovelorn plaints, high in the pines' far tops. She used to stand and listen to their cooing, loving it, and in her young, she-dove's heart plaining with them, she did not know or ask why.

And there, more than one rainy autumn day, she came and stood with her boughs in her arms, watching the misty rain veiling the sumptuous colors of the wooded hill, feeling, with a kind of joyful pleasure, the light-falling drops caressing her from her red leaf-wreaths to her damp feet, which mattered absolutely nothing. How could the wet grass she seemed to have sprung from earth with, the fresh cool rain she loved, hurt her, a young, young Dryad, in these her Dryad days?

How many times it befel her to follow this road—sometimes running fast, sometimes stealing softly, sometimes breaking away from it to plunge into the wood and run again until she stopped to listen, looking up into some tree, or peering into a thicket or bush.

This was when she was giving herself up to what she called "the bird chases." She liked them so — the birds. She knew nothing of them. Birds such as the woods hold had not lived in the Square. There had been only serious-minded little sparrows nesting in the chimneys and in the gutterings. They brought up large families under the shadows of water-piping, and taught them to fly on the wet slates. They were grateful for crumbs, particularly in snowy weather, and the Nursery patronized them. But they were not bluebirds with a brief little trill of Spring carolled persistently from all sorts of boughs and fence corners; they were not scarlet birds with black velvet marks and crests; they were not yellow birds like stray canaries, or chattering jays, or mocking-birds with the songs of all the woods in their throats; they were not thrushes and wrens, or woodpeckers drumming and tapping in that curiously human way.

As there had been no one to tell her the actual names of the flowers, so there was no one to tell her the real names of the birds. She used to ask the negroes who lived at the foot of Mount Ararat, but the result was so unsatisfactory that she gave it up.

"What is that little bird that sings like this, Aunt Cynthy?" she would say, trying to imitate its note. "It is a little blue thing."

"That's the bluebird," seemed rather incomplete to her at the outset.

"And the bright red one with the black marks and crest?"

"That's the redbird," which did not seem much more definite.

"I can *see* they are blue and red," she used to say. "Haven't they a name?"

But they had no other name, and when the birds described were less marked in color there seemed to be no names at all. So she began to commit the birds to memory, learning their notes and colors and forms by heart. In this way were instituted the bird chases.

If she heard a new song or note she ran after it until she saw the bird and could watch him piping or singing. It was very interesting and led her many a mile.

Sometimes she believed birds came

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and sang near her, under cover, for the mere fun of leading her through the woods. They would begin on a tree near by and then fly away and seem to hide again until she followed them. She always followed until she caught sight of her bird. But they had wonderful ways of eluding her, and led her over hill and dale, and through thicket and brambles, and even then sometimes got away.

There was one with a yellow breast and a queer little cry which she pursued for several days, but she saw him at last and afterward became quite familiar with him. And there was one, who was always one of two—a tender, sad little thing who could never be alone, and who was always an unanswered problem to her, and somehow, above all, her best beloved. It was a mystery because no one ever seemed to have seen it but herself, and her description of it was never recognized.

It was a little bird—a tiny one, a soft, small, rounded one, with a black velvet cap, and on its first appearance it came and sat upon the rail of the veranda, and waited there, uttering a piteous little note. She knew that it was waiting and was calling to its mate because it was a timid little thing, existing only under the cover of his wing and love. He could only be a small creature himself, but the Small Person felt that in the round, bright, timid eyes he was a refuge from the whole large world, the brief, soft, plaintive cry for him was so pathetically trustful in its appealing.

The Small Person, who was sitting on the wooden steps, was afraid to stir for fear of frightening her.

"You poor little mite," she murmured, "don't be so sorrowful. He'll come directly."

And when he did come and was lovingly rejoiced over, and the tiny pair flew away together, she was quite relieved.

There was something in the brief, plaintive note which always led her to follow it when she heard it afterward, which only happened at rare intervals. There seemed to be some sad little question or story in it which she could not help wishing she could understand. But she never did, though each time she heard the sound she ran to look for it, and stood beneath its tree looking up with a sense of a persistent question in her own breast. What was it about? What did it want? What was it sad for? She never heard the tiny thing without finding it huddled down patiently upon some bough or spray, calling for its mate. And to her it never had any other name than the one she gave it of "The little mournful bird."

These Dryad days were of the first years of her teens. They were the early Spring of her young life. And she was in Love—in Love with morning, noon, and night; with Spring and Summer and Winter; with leaves and roots and trees; with rain and dew and sun; with shadows and odors and winds; with all the little living things; with the rapture of being and unknowingness and mere Life—with the whole World.

CHAPTER XV.

"MY OBJECT IS REMUNERATION."

She always felt herself under a personal obligation to Christopher Columbus. The years in which came the Dryad days would have been very different if they had been spent in the Square or within reach of it. Reduced resources in a great town or city where one has lived always, mean change of habits and surroundings, shabbiness, anxiety, and annoyance. They mean depression and dreariness, loss of courage, and petty humiliations without end. In a foreign land among mountains and forests they mean seclusion, freedom, and novelty. It is novelty to live in a tiny white house, to wait upon one's self and everyone else, to wear a cotton frock and chase birds through the woods without the encumbrances of hats and gloves and parasols. It is also freedom. But in Dryad days lived in an unsylvan age a serious reduction of resources is felt. Detail seems unnecessary, but, without entering into detail, it may be stated that this reduction of resource was felt on the summit of Mount Ararat. Alas! one cannot live always in the Bower, one must come home to dinner and to bed. Material and painful but unavoidable. Even cot-

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ton frocks wear out and must be washed. And the openings for the Boys had not been of sufficient size to allow of their passing through to ease and fortune. The consequences were curious sometimes and rather trying.

"We are decayed ladies and gentlemen," the Small Person used to say to herself. "We ought to be living in a ruined feudal castle and have ancient servitors who refuse to leave us and will not take any wages. But it is not at all like that." It was not at all.

It was so very unlike it that there were occasions when she gathered her leaves and flowers with a thoughtful little frown on her forehead, and when she talked the matter over with Edith or Mamma. Edith was the practical member of the family.

"If one could *do* something!" she said, thoughtfully.

But there are so few things to do if one is very young and quite inexperienced and lives on the top of Mount Ararat.

Still the serious necessity increased and she pondered over it more and more.

"I wish I *could* do something," she said next. She began to have long discussions with Edith as to what one might invent as a means of resource—what one could teach or learn—or make. But nothing proved practicable.

There was a queer little room with unfinished walls and rafters where she had a table by a window and wrote stories in wet or cold weather when the Bower was out of the question. There was no fireplace and she used to sit wrapped in a shawl for warmth. She had a little cat which always followed her and jumped upon the table when she sat down, curling up in the curve of her left arm. The little cat's name was Dora, and it was also a Small Person. It had a clearly defined character, and understood that it was assisting in literary efforts. It also added to the warmth the shawl gave. Edith used to come upstairs to the rough little room and talk to her, and gradually she got into the habit of reading to her pieces of the stories. She began with extracts—speeches, scenes, chapters—and led on by the delight of her audience, which was stimulating as that of the Listeners, she read all she wrote.

Edith was a delightful listener. She was an emotional little being, and exquisitely ready with tears, and uncontrolled in laughter. She was at the same time a remarkable Small Person and singularly perceptive.

They used to sit and talk over the stories — telling each other what they liked best or were not quite sure of. The Small Person had a curious feeling that in reading to Edith she was submitting her creations to a sort of infallible critic —one who was infallible not through experience or training, but through a certain unfailing truth of sentiment and emotion, and an unfaltering good taste. It must be recorded, however, that neither of them for a moment contemplated the chance of a larger public existing for the stories. Never for an instant had it occurred to the Small Person that they were worth publishing. That would have seemed to her a height of presumption quite grotesque. They were hidden from the Boys as carefully as ever, and derided as mercilessly when they were mentioned by them. "Frances's love stories" were an unfailing source of jocular entertainment. It was never ill-natured entertainment, and there was plenty of rough young wit in it; but naturally a young Briton finds it rather a lark to contemplate the thought of a small girl he has chaffed and patronized all his life secreting herself to write pages of romantic description of the emotions of "a case of spoons." The Boys were fond of her, and their intercourse was marked by bounteous good-nature and the best of tempers and spirits, but their impression naturally was that the stories would be "bosh." But she continued to write them—with the little cat curled in her left arm—and read them to Edith. It was the "Answers to Correspondents" in various magazines which inspired her with her tremendously daring thought. Things like these:

"Elaine the Fair.—Your story has merit, but is not quite suited to our columns. *Never* write on both sides of your paper."

"Christabel.—We do not return rejected manuscript unless stamps are enclosed for postage."

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"Blair of Athol.—We accept your poem, 'The Knight's Token.' Shall be glad to hear from you again."

She read them on the final pages of *Godey's Lady's Book* and *Peterson's Magazine*, etc. Her circumstances were not sufficiently princely to admit of her being among the subscribers, but occasionally a copy or so drifted in her way. They were much read at that time in the locality.

She was reading these absorbing replies to the correspondents one day when a thought floated into her mind, and after a few moments of indefiniteness took shape and presented itself before her. She blushed a little at first because it had such an air of boldness. She rather thrust it aside, but after a while she found herself contemplating it—as if from afar off.

"I wonder how much they pay for the stories in magazines," she said, reflectively, to Edith.

Edith did not know, naturally, and had not formed any opinion.

"I wonder if they pay much," the Small Person continued; "and—what sort of people write them?" It seemed impossible that ordinary, every-day people could write things that would be considered worth paying for and publishing in magazines. It seemed to imply immense talents and cultivation and training and enormous dignity.

She did not think this because she found the stories invariably brilliant, but because she felt that there must be some merit she was not clever enough to detect; if not they would never have been published.

"Sometimes they are not so *awfully* clever," she said.

"Well," said Edith, boldly, "I've seen lots of them not half as nice as yours."

"Ah!"—she exclaimed, conscious of being beset by her sheepish feeling—"that's because you are my sister."

"No, it isn't," said the valiant Edith, with her favorite little pucker of her forehead. "I don't care whether I'm your sister or not. Some of your stories are beautiful!"

The Small Person blushed, because she was of the Small Persons who are given to superfluous blushing. "I wonder," she said, "if the magazine people would think so."

"I don't know anything about magazine people," said Edith; "but I don't see why they shouldn't think so."

"They wouldn't," said the Small Person, with a sudden sense of discouragement. "Of course they wouldn't."

But she could not help the thought of the answered correspondents, returning to her afterward. She found herself wondering about them as she rambled through the woods or lay on the grass in the Bower. How did they send their stories to the magazines? Was it by post or by express? If it was by post how many stamps would it take? How could one find out? It would be important that one should put on enough. She remembered "answers" such as this. "March Hare.—We cannot receive MSS. on which insufficient postage has been paid." It was evidently necessary to make a point of the postage.

Then there was the paper. To meet the approval of an august being it seemed as if something special must be required. And more than once she had read instructions of such a nature as: "Airy, Fairy Lilian.—Write in a clear hand on ordinary foolscap paper."

She was only fifteen, and her life had been spent between the Square and the Bower. Her horizon had not been a broad one, and had not embraced practical things. She had had no personal acquaintance with Ordinary Foolscap. If the statement had demanded extraordinary foolscap she would have felt it only natural.

Somehow she found a timid, but growing interest in the whole subject. She could not quite get away from it. And when circumstances occurred which directed her attention specially to the results of the reduced resources she was led to dwell on it with a certain sense of fascination.

"Something *must* be done!" she said to herself, desperately. "We can't go on like this. Someone *must* do something."

The three little girls talked together at times quite gloomily. They all agreed that Somebody must do something. The Boys were doing their best, but luck did not seem to be with them.

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"Something *must* be done," the Small Person kept repeating.

"Yes," replied Edith, "but what must it be and Who will do it?"

The people whose stories were bought and printed must some time have sent their first stories. And they could not have known whether they were really good or not until they had asked and found out. The only way of finding out was to send one—written in a clear hand on *one* side of ordinary foolscap—having first made quite sure that it had stamps enough on it. If a person had the courage to do that, he or she would at least hear if it was worth reading—if a stamp was enclosed.

These were the reflections with which the Small Person's mind was occupied.

And if it was worth reading—if the August Being deigned to think it so—and was not rendered rabid and infuriate by insufficient postage, or indistinct writing, or by having to read on both sides of the ordinary foolscap, if he was in need of stories for his magazine, and if he was in a good temper he might accept it—and buy it.

If the Listeners had liked her stories so much, if Edith and Edwina liked them, if Edith thought they were as nice as some she had read in *Godey's Lady's Book*, might it not be just possible that—that an Editor might deign to read one and perhaps even say that it "had merit," even if it was not good enough to buy. If he said that much, she could study the stories in the *Lady's Book*, etc., assiduously enough, perhaps, to learn the secret of their success, and finally do something which might be worthy to compete with them.

She was a perfectly unassuming child. She had never had any feeling about her story-telling but that it seemed part of herself—something she could not help doing. Secretly she had been afraid, as time went by, that she had been Romantic with the Doll, and in private she was afraid that she was Romantic about the stories. The idea that anyone but the Listeners and Edith and Edwina would be likely to care to hear or read them had never entered her mind. The cheerful derision of the Boys added to her sensitive shyness about them, and upon the whole she regarded her little idiosyncrasy as a thing to be kept rather quiet. Nothing but actual stress of circumstances would have spurred her to the boldness of daring to hope for them. But in those days Noah's Ark found itself lacking such common things—things which could not be dispensed with even by the most decayed of ladies and gentlemen.

So one day after many mental struggles she found herself sitting alone with Edith and the little cat, in the small room with the bare walls and rafters. And she gathered her courage in both hands.

"Edith," she said, "I've been thinking about something."

Edith looked at her with interest. She was a lovely little person and a wonderful friend for her years—which were thirteen.

"What is it?" she said.

"Do you think—do you *think* it would be silly to send one of my stories—to a magazine—and see if they would take it."

I cannot help believing that at the first moment Edith rather lost her breath. The two were English children, brought up in a simple English nursery in the most primitively conventional way. Such a life is not conducive to a spirit of boldness and enterprise. In matters of point of view they would have seemed to the American mind incredibly young for their years. If they had been American children they would have been immensely cooler and far less inclined to ultra-respectful attitudes toward authority.

"Do you?" said the Small Person. "Do you?"

Edith gathered herself together also. Across a lifetime the picture of her small face rises with perfect distinctness. She was a fair little person, with much curling blond hair and an expressive little forehead which had a habit of puckering itself. She was still startled, but she bore herself with a courage which was heroic.

"No," she answered, "I don't!"

If she had said that she did, the matter might have ended there, but as it was, the Small Person breathed again. She felt the matter might be contem-

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plated and approached more nearly. One might venture at least to talk about it in private.

"I have been thinking and thinking about it," she said. "Even if they are not good enough to be published it would not do any harm just to try. They can only be sent back—and then I should know. Do you think we dare do it?"

"If I were you I would," said Edith.

"I believe," hesitated the Small Person, "I do believe I will."

Edith began to become excited.

"Oh," she said, "I think it would be splendid! What would you send?"

"I should have to write something new. I haven't anything ready that I should care to send. I'd write something carefully—just as well as I could. There's a story I began to write when we lived in the Square, three years ago. I never finished it, and I only wrote scenes out of it in old account-books; but I remember what it was about, and the other day I found an old book with some scraps of it in. And I really do think it's rather nice. And I might finish it, perhaps. She began to tell the story, and became exhilarated with the telling, as she always did, and Edith thought it an enchanting story, and so it was decided that it should be finished and put to the test.

"But there's one thing," she said, "I would not have the Boys know for anything in the world. They would laugh so, and they would think it such a joke if it was sent back again. I'm going to put in stamps to send it back with, because if you put on stamps enough they will send it back. And perhaps they wouldn't take the trouble to write a letter if they didn't like it, and I didn't send the extra stamps. You often see in magazines a notice that manuscript will be returned if stamps are sent. So in that way I shall be sure to find out. But I must get them without the Boys knowing."

"Yes, you must," said Edith. "They *would* tease you so if it came back. But what are you going to do? You know there isn't any money now but what the Boys get. And that's little enough, goodness knows."

"We shall have to think about it," said the Small Person, "and contrive. It will take a good deal of contriving, but I have to write the story first."

"Do you think it will take many stamps?" asked Edith, beginning to pucker her expressive little forehead, anxiously.

"Yes, a good many, I'm afraid," was the Small Person's answer. "And then we have to buy the foolscap paper—ordinary foolscap. But of all things promise and swear you won't breathe a word before the Boys."

It was a marvel that they did not betray themselves in some way. It was so thrilling a secret. While the story was being written they could think and talk of nothing else. The Small Person used to come down from the raftered Temple of the Muses with her little cat under her arm, and her cheeks a blaze of scarlet. The more absorbed and interested she was the more brilliant her cheeks were.

"How red your cheeks are, my dear," Mamma would say. "Does your head ache?"

But her head did not ache, though it would have done, if she had not been a splendidly strong little animal.

"I always know when you've been writing very fast," Edith used to say; "your cheeks always look so flaming red."

It was not long, of course, before Mamma was taken into confidence. What she thought it would be difficult to say, but she was lovable and sustaining as usual.

"It won't do any harm to try, dear," she said. "It seems to me you write very nice things, for any one so young, and perhaps some of the editors might like them; and, of course, it would be a great help if they would pay you a little money."

"But the Boys mustn't know one word," said the Small Person. "I'll tell them if it's accepted, but if it isn't, I'd rather be dead than that they should find out."

And so the story went on, and it was read aloud under the rafters, and Edith revelled in it, and the little cat lay curled up in the Small Person's left arm, quite undisturbed by the excitement in the atmosphere around her.

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And as the work went on the two plotters discussed and planned and contrived.

First, how to get the ordinary foolscap to copy out the manuscript in a beautiful clear hand; next, how to get the address of the Editor to be approached; next, how to address him; next, how to find out how many stamps would be necessary to carry the fateful package and bring it back, if such was to be its doom.

It had all to be done in such secrecy and with such precautions. To walk to town and back was a matter of two or three hours, and the Boys would wonder if they did not hear why a journey had been made. They always saw the person who went to town. Consequently no member of the household could go without attracting attention. So some outsider must be found who could make the journey to visit a book-store and find the address required. It would have been all so simple if it had not been for the Boys.

But by the time the story was finished an acquaintance who lived on a neighboring farm had procured the address and some information about the stamps, though this last could not be applied very definitely as the weight of the package could only be guessed at, in the absence of letter scales.

The practical views of the Small Person at this crisis impress me greatly. They were so incompatible with her usual vagueness and romancings that they strike me as rather deliciously incongruous.

"I must have the right kind of paper," she argued, "because if I sent something that seemed queer to them they would think me silly to begin with. And I must write it very plainly, so that it will be easy to read, and on only one side, because if they are bothered by anything it will make them feel cross and they will hate me, and hate my story too. Then, as to the letter I send with it, I must be very careful about that. Of course they have a great many such letters and they must be tired of reading them. So I must make it very short. I would send it without a letter, but I must make them understand that I want it sent back if they don't like it, and call their attention to the stamps and let them know I am doing it for money and not just for the fun of getting the story published."

"How will you tell them that?" asked Edith, a trifle alarmed. It seemed so appalling and indelicate to explain to an Editor that you wanted money.

The Small Person felt the same thing. She felt this sordid mention of an expectation of receiving dollars and cents in return for her work a rather gross thing—a bold thing which might cause the Editor to receive a severe shock and regard her with cold disgust as a brazen Small Person. Upon the whole, it was the most awful part of the situation. But there was no help for it. Having put her hand to the plough she could not turn back, or trifle with the chance that the Editor might think her a well-to-do Small Person, who did not write stories for publication through sheer need but for amusement.

"I shall have to think that over," she said, seriously. "I don't want to offend them, of course, but I *must* tell them that!"

If it were possible to depict in sufficiently strong colors her mental impressions of the manners, idiosyncrasies, and powers of an Editor, the picture would be an interesting one. It was an impression so founded upon respect and unbounded awe. Between an utterly insignificant little girl in the mountains of East Tennessee, and an Editor in a princely official apartment in Philadelphia or New York, invested by Fate with the power to crush people to the earth and reduce them to impalpable dust by refusing their manuscripts—or to raise them to dizziest pinnacles of bliss by accepting them—there was a gulf imagination could not cross. Buddha himself, sitting in rapt passiveness with folded hands and down-dropped lids, was not so marvellous or so final. Editors presented themselves to her as representing a distinct superhuman race. It seemed impossible that they were moved by the ordinary emotions and passions of mankind. Why she was pervaded with a timorousness, with regard to them, which only Mad Bulls or Tigers with hydrophobia would have justified, it is not easy to explain. Somehow the picture of an Editor rendered infuriate

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—"gone *must*," as it were—in consequence of an inadequacy of stamps, or a fault in punctuation, or as a result of indistinct handwriting covering *both* sides of the ordinary foolscap, was a thing which haunted both her waking and sleeping hours. He would return the manuscript with withering comment, or perhaps not return it at all, and keep all the stamps, which might be considered perfectly proper for an Editor if one broke his Mede and Persian laws. Such a being as this must be approached with salaams and genuflections, and forehead touching the dust.

Poor, little, anxious girl; I find her —rather touching at this distance—sitting in her raftered room, scribbling hotly, with her little cat in her arm, and her cheeks like scarlet flame. But she could not write the explanatory letter to the Editor until she had got the money to buy the paper to copy the story and the stamps to send it. And how to do this without applying to the Boys? The rafters and the little cat presided over hours of planning and discussion. What could be done.

"If we could make some money ourselves," said the Small Person, mournfully.

"But we can't," said Edith. "We've tried, you know."

"Yes," said the Small Person. "Embroidery—and people don't want it. Music lessons—people think I'm too young. Chickens—and they wouldn't hatch, and when they did they died of the gapes; besides the bother of having to sit on the hen to make her sit on the nest, and *live* at full speed round the yard chasing them back into the coops when they get through holes. Out of all that setting of goose-eggs only one hatched, and that wasn't a goose—it was a gander—and a plank fell on it and killed it."

They both indulged in a rueful giggle. The poultry-raising episode had been a very trying and exciting one.

"If we had something to sell," she went on.

"We haven't," said Edith.

The Story touched the Small Person sadly on the shoulder.

"It would be awfully mournful," she said, "if I really *could* write stories that people would like—and if I could sell them and get money enough to make us quite comfortable—if all that good fortune was in me—and I never found it out all my life—just because I can't buy some paper and postage-stamps."

It seemed too tragic. They sat and looked at each other in gloom. The conversation ended after a short time in desperate discouragement, and the Small Person was obliged to wander out to her hollow on the woodland road and stand for a long time looking at the changing trees, listening with a strange feeling to the sorrowful plaining of the doves on the tops of the pine-trees.

As the leaves were changing then, it cannot have been very long before the inspiration came which solved the problem. Who gave the information which gave rise to it is not a detail which anyone can remember. Something or other makes it seem probable that it was Edwina, who came into the writing-room one day and sat down saying, *à propos* of nothing in particular:

"Aunt Cynthy's two girls made a dollar yesterday by selling wild grapes in the market. They got them in the woods over the hill."

"Which hill?" asked the Small Person.

"The hill near the house—the one you can see out of the window. They say there are plenty there."

"Are there?" said the Small Person.

"I wonder how much they got a gallon?" said Edith.

"I don't know," said Edwina. "But they sold a dollar's worth, and they say they are going to gather more."

"Edith!" exclaimed the Small Person, "Edith!" A brilliant idea had come to her. She felt her cheeks grow hot.

"Suppose," she said, "suppose *we* went and gathered some—a whole lot—and suppose we gave the girls part of the money to sell them for us in the market—perhaps we should get enough to buy the stamps and paper."

It seemed an inspiration of the gods. It was as if some divine chance had been given to them. Edith and Edwina clapped their hands. If wild grapes had been sold they would sell again; if the woods were full of them why should they not gather them—quarts, gallons, bucketfuls of them—as many as necessity required.

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There arose an excited, joyous gabbling at once. It would be delightful. It would be fun in itself. It would be like going gypsying. And if there were really a great many grapes, they might be sold for more money than would pay for the stamps.

"It's a good thing we are not living in the Square now," said the Small Person. "We couldn't go and gather wild grapes in Back Sydney Street."

Suddenly they felt rich and hopeful. *If* they found grapes enough—*if* they were sold—*if* the Editor was in a benign humor, who could tell what might happen.

"If they buy this one," said the Small Person, "I can write others, and perhaps they will buy those too. I can always make up stories. Wouldn't it be queer if it turned out *that* was the thing I have to do. You know how we have kept saying, 'Something *must* be done.' Oh! Edith, wouldn't it be beautiful!"

"Of course it would be beautiful," answered Edith.

"Perhaps," sighed the Small Person, "it is too nice to be true. But we'll go and get the wild grapes."

And so they did.

It was Edith who arranged the detail. She saw the little mulatto girls and talked with them. They were greatly pleased at the idea of selling the grapes. They would pilot the party to places where they believed there were vines, and they would help in the gathering, themselves. The expedition began to wear the air of an exhilarating escapade.

It would have been a delightful thing to do, even if it had been arranged merely as a holiday. They issued forth to conquer in the wildest spirits. Each one carried a tin bucket, and each wore a cotton frock, and a sun-bonnet or a utilitarian straw-hat. The sun was rather hot, but the day was a golden one. There was gold in the trees, gold in the air, gold in the distances. The speculators had no decorum in their method. They chased about the warm, yellowing woods like wild things. They laughed and shouted to each other when they scrambled apart. They forced their way through undergrowth, and tore their way through brambles; they clambered over great logs; they uttered wild little shrieks at false alarms of snakes; they shouted with joy when they came upon vines; they filled their buckets, and ate grapes to repletion, and swung on the rope like vines themselves.

The Small Person had never been less sober. At intervals she roamed away a little, and stood in some warm, golden place, with young trees and bushes closed about her, simply breathing the air, and enraptured with a feeling of being like a well-sunned Indian peach. Her cheeks had such an Autumn heat in them—that glow which is not like the heat of summer. And what a day of dreams. If—if—if! "If" is such a charming word—such a benign one—such a sumptuous one. One cannot always say with entire sense of conviction, "I have a kingdom and a princely fortune, and I will build a palace of gold"—but who cannot say, "*If* I had a kingdom and the fortune of a prince, I would build a palace of gold." The golden palace rises fair, and one almost hears the courtiers speak. "If" gives a shadow, the substance of which would be a poorer thing.

She built her palaces that day, and furnished them, and *lived* in them, as she searched for her wild grapes. They were innocent palaces, and small ones, for she was a very young and vague thing; but they were things of light and love and beauty, and filled with the diaphanous forms of the beliefs and dreams only such young palaces can hold.

The party went home at sunset with its tin pails full to the brim and covered with fresh vine-leaves.

"We shall get two or three dollars fer these," said one of the pilots. "Me an' Ser'phine didn't have nigh onto as many that other time."

"Now if they sell them," said Edith and the Small Person when they got home, "we shall have the paper and the postage-stamps."

It seems to be regretted that the amount they sold for cannot be recalled—but it was enough to buy the postage-stamps and paper and pay all expenses, and even leave something over. The

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business part of the speculation was a complete success.

With what care the ordinary foolscap was chosen; with what discreet precautions that it should be of the right size and shade, and should not enrage the Editor the instant he saw it. How large and round and clear each letter was made in the copying. An Editor who was afflicted with cataract might have read it half-way across his palatial sanctum. And then the letter that was written to accompany the venture! How it was reflected upon, and reasoned about, and discussed! "An Editor does not want to know anything about *me*," the Small Person said. "He does not know me, and he doesn't care about me, and he won't want to be bothered. I shall just say I have enclosed the stamps to send the manuscript back with, if he does not want it. And I shall have to speak about the money. You see, Edith, if the stories are worth writing, they must be worth reading, and if they are worth printing and reading they must be worth paying for, and if they are not worth publishing and reading they are not worth writing, and I had better not waste my time on them." Whence this clear and practical point of view it would be difficult to say. But she was quite definite about it. The urgency of the situation had made her definite. Perhaps at a crisis she became practical—but it was only at a crisis.

And after serious deliberation and much rewriting and elimination the following concise and unmistakable epistle was enclosed in a roll of manuscript with enough extra stamps to have remailed an Editor:

"SIR: I enclose stamps for the return of the accompanying MS., 'Miss Desborough's Difficulties,' if you do not find it suitable for publication in your magazine. My object is remuneration.

"Yours Respectfully,

"F. HODGSON."

This was all except the address, which was that of the post-office of the neighboring town. Both Edith and herself were extremely proud of the closing sentence. It sounded so business-like. And no Editor could mistake it. And if this one was offended it positively could not be helped.

"And it's true," she said. "I never should have dreamed of sending a thing to an Editor if I hadn't been *obliged* to. My object *is* remuneration."

And then they could not help breaking into childish giggles at the comical aspect of their having done a thing so bold, and their ideas of what the Editor would think if he could see the two curly and innocent Small Persons who had written that unflinchingly mercenary sentence.

CHAPTER XVI.

AND SO SHE DID.

IT is a simple enough matter to send a story with a serene mind to Editors one knows, and of whom one is aware that they possess the fine intellectual acumen which leads them to appreciate the boon bestowed upon them, and the firmness to contemplate with some composure the fact that one's "object is remuneration." But it is quite a different affair to send one's timid and defenceless first-born into the cave of an unknown dragon, whose fangs may be dripping with the blood of such innocents.

Oh, the counting of the hours which elapse before it reaches its destination, and the awful thrill of realizing that perhaps at the very hour one is living through, the Editor is Reading it! The Small Person did not lose any quakings or heart-beats to which she was entitled by the situation. She experienced them all to the utmost, and even invented some new ones. She, and Edith quaked together.

It was so awful not to know anything whatever, to be so blankly ignorant of editorial habits and customs. How long did an Editor keep a manuscript before he accepted it, or put all the stamps on with a blow and sent it back? Did he send it back the day after he had read it, or did he keep it for months or years? Might one become old and gray without knowing whether one's story was accepted or rejected? If he accepted it, would he send the money at

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once or would he wait a long time, and how much would it be when it came? Five dollars—ten—twenty—a hundred? *Could* it possibly be as much as a hundred! And if it *could* be a hundred—oh! what things could be done with it, and how every body could live happily forever after!

"I could write one in a week," the Small Person said. "That would be *four hundred* dollars a month! Oh! no, Edith," breathlessly, "it *couldn't* be a hundred!" This was because it seemed impossible that any one could make four hundred dollars a month by her stories and really retain her senses.

She felt it was better to restrain such frenzy and discipline herself by putting it as low as possible.

"Suppose it is only about a dollar," she said. "I'm sure it's worth more, but they might be very stingy. And we want money so much—we are so *obliged* to have it, that I suppose I should be forced to let them have it for a dollar and even go on writing more."

"It *couldn't* be as little as that," said Edith.

"It would be rather cheap even for me," said the Small Person, and she began to laugh a little hysterically. "A dollar story!"

Then she began to make calculations. She was not at all good at calculations.

"The magazine costs two dollars a year," she pondered. "And if they have fifty thousand subscribers, that would make a hundred thousand dollars a year. They haven't *many* stories in each number. Some of the magazines have more than fifty thousand subscribers! Edith," with a little gasp, "suppose it was a thousand dollars!"

They vibrated like pendulums from light-headed ecstasy to despair.

"They'll send it back," she said, in hopeless downfall, "or they'll keep the stamps and they won't send it back at all, and I shall wait weeks, and weeks, and weeks, and never know *anything* about it. And all this thinking and hoping and contriving will have gone for worse than nothing!"

She ended with tears in her eyes, half-laughing at herself because they were there, and she was an emotional Small Person, who had also a sense of the humor of her own exaggerations. She was a creature who laughed a great deal, and was much given to making her sisters and brothers laugh. She liked to say ridiculous things and exaggerate her views of a situation until they became grotesque and she was obliged to laugh wildly at them herself. "The family's Ups and the family's Downs" were a source of unbridled jokes which still had a touch of usefulness in them.

"I laugh instead of crying," she used to say. "There *is* some fun in laughing and there isn't any in crying, and it *is* ridiculous in one way."

She made many of these rueful jokes in the days that followed. It seemed as if these were months of days and the tension became more than was bearable. It is likely that only a few weeks passed.

But at last—at last something came. Not the manuscript with all the stamps in a row, but a letter.

And she and Edith and Mamma and Edwina sat down panting to read it.

And when it was read they could not understand it!

The letter was not preserved, but the memory of the impression it created preserved itself.

Somehow it seemed strangely vague to their inexperienced minds. It began—thank God—by praising the story. It seemed to like it. It plainly did not despise it at all. Its sole criticisms were on the unceremonious abbreviation of a name, and an intimation that it was rather long. It did not say it was refused, but neither Edith nor the Small Person were at all sure that it meant that it was accepted, and it said nothing about the Remuneration.

"Have they accepted it?" said the Small Person.

"They haven't rejected it," said Edith.

"They evidently think it is rather good," said Mamma.

"I don't know exactly what they mean," the Small Person finally decided, "but I believe it has something to do with the Remuneration."

Perhaps it had, and perhaps it had not. Perhaps greater experience might have been able to reach something technical in it they could not see. They read and re-read it, thought and reasoned, and invented translations. But

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the only conclusion they could reach was that perhaps Remuneration not being the Editor's object, was his objection, and that he thought that by adroit encouragement and discouragement he might obtain the prize without the Object.

So after a little waiting the Small Person wrote to ask for its return. In after years she was frequently puzzled by her memory of that first letter. She never knew what it had meant. Experience taught her that it was curiously unbusiness-like, and inclined her to believe that in some way it was meant to convey that the objection was the Remuneration.

Then the story was sent to another Editor.

"I'll try two or three times," the Author said to Edith. "I wont give up the first minute, but I won't keep on forever. If they don't want it, that must mean that it isn't good enough."

The story—whose real name was not "Miss Desborough's Difficulties," but something rather like it—was one she had planned and partially written in her thirteenth year, in the Square. One or two cherished scenes she had written in the old account-books. Many years later, on being exhumed from among old magazines in the Congressional Library, and read again, it revealed itself quite a respectable, but not in the least striking, story of love, estrangement, and reconciliation between a stately marvel of English young-lady beauty and good-breeding, and the stalwart, brave, and masculine British officer, who was separated and suffered with her in high-bred dignity and fine endurance. It was an evident —though unconscious—echo of like stories in *Cornhill*, *Temple Bar*, and *London Society*. The Small Person had been much attached to these periodicals. Its meritorious features were a certain reality of feeling in the people who lived in it, and a certain nice quality in the feeling itself. However trifling and romantic the plot, the officer was a nice fellow and a gentleman, the beauteous English maiden had good manners, and her friends, the young-married people, were sympathetic and sweet-tempered. It moved with some dramatic touch and had an air of conviction. Otherwise it had no particular qualities or originality.

Did months elapse again before they heard from the second Editor—or was it years? Perhaps it was only weeks, but they contained several protracted lifetimes.

And then! Another letter! Not the manuscript yet!

"Sir: (They were immensely edified at being called Sir.) Your story, 'Miss Desborough's Difficulties,' is so distinctly English that our reader is not sure of its having been written by an American. We see that the name given us for the address is not that of the writer. (The Samaritan friend had lent his name—that the mail might evade the Boys.) Will you kindly inform us if the story is original?

"Yours truly," etc.

This was the letter in effect. It would be impossible to recall the exact words.

Shaken to the centre of her being the Small Person replied by the next mail.

"The story is original. I am English myself, and have only been a short time in America."

The Editor replied quite promptly:

"Before we decide will you send us another story?"

How they were elated almost to delirium! How delighted Mamma's smile was! How the two unliterary ones exulted and danced about.

"It will be Accepted! It will be Accepted! It will be Accepted!" they danced about exclaiming.

"Perhaps the Editor will buy them both!" said Edith. "That will be *two* instead of one!"

The Small Person went up to the raftered room positively trembling with joy and excitement. The Editor did not believe she had written her own story. He would not believe it until she wrote another. He would see! She would show him!

The little cat lay curled up in her arm for three days, seeming lulled by the endless scratching of the pen. She said nothing, but perhaps in some occult feline way she was assisting. The Small Person's cheeks blazed hotter and hot-

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ter. She felt as if she were running a race for life or death. But she was not tired. She was strung up to the highest and intensest pitch. The Story was good to her. Her best beloved, who had stood by her all her vivid short life —making dull things bright and bright things brilliant—who had touched the face of all the world with a tender, shining hand—who had never deserted her—did not desert her now. Faithful and dear fair shadow of things, how passionately she loved it! In three days the new story was finished. It was shorter than "Miss Desborough," but she knew it was as good, and that the Editor would see it was written by the same hand. But she made it an American story without a touch of English coloring. And the grapes had brought enough money for more postage-stamps.

She did not walk for the next few days—she danced. She chased about the woods wildly, gathering more flowers and leaves and following more birds than ever. Sometimes when she went to the hollow in the road she felt as if she might be lifted from her feet by the strange exhilaration within her, and carried away over the variegated tree-tops into the blue.

Her stories were of some use after all. They were not altogether things to be laughed at because they were Romantic. Somehow she felt almost as if she were vindicating and exalting a friend who had been kind and tender, and yet despised. Ah, how *good* it was! *If* all would go well—if she might go on—if she need be ashamed no longer—but write openly as many stories as she liked—how *good* to be alive! She was so young and ardent, she knew nothing and believed *everything*. It might have been arranged by Fortune that she should get the fullest, finest flavor of it. When the answer came they were passing through one of "the Family's Downs." That was their manner of describing the periods when everything seemed at its worst; when even the Boys, who were robustly life-enjoying creatures wished "something would turn up." Nothing is more trying than to feel that one's sole hope is that "something may turn up." The something usually turns down.

And on one of these days the Letter came. Standing by a table in the bare little room, the Small Person opened it with quivering hands, while Mamma and Edith looked tremblingly on.

She read it, rather weakly, aloud.

"SIR: We have decided to accept your two stories, and enclose payment. Fifteen dollars for 'Aces or Clubs,' and twenty dollars for 'Miss Desborough's Difficulties.' We shall be glad to hear from you again.

"Yours, truly," etc.

She gave a little hysterical laugh, which was half a gasp.

"They—they've accepted it," she said, rather obviously to Edith, "and they've sent me thirty-five dollars."

"Well, my dear," said Mamma, quite tremulously, "they really were very nice tales. I could not help thinking so."

"They are Accepted," cried Edith, quite shrill with ecstasy. "And they will take more. And you can go on writing them all your life."

And just at that moment — as if it had been arranged like a scene in a play, one of the Boys came in. It was the elder one, and rather an intimate of the Small Person, of whom he was really quite fond, though he considered her Romantic, and having a strong sense of humor, his witticisms on the subject of the stories had been well worth hearing.

"What's up?" he said. "What is the matter with you all?"

"Come out on the Porch," said the Small Person.

Why she was suddenly overwhelmed with a sort of shyness, which embraced even Mamma and Edith, she could not have told.

"Well," he said, when they stood outside.

"I've just had a letter," said the Small Person, awkwardly. "It's—it's from an Editor."

"An Editor!" he repeated. "What does that mean?"

"I sent him one of my stories," she went on, feeling that she was getting red. "And he wouldn't believe I had written it, and he wrote and asked me to send another, I suppose to prove

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I could do it. And I wrote another—and sent it. And he has accepted them both, and sent me thirty-five dollars."

"Thirty-five dollars!" he exclaimed, staring at her.

"Yes," she answered. "Here's the check."

And she held it out to him.

He took it and looked at it, and broke into a good-natured, delighted, boyish laugh.

"Well, by Jove!" said he, looking at her, half-amused and half-amazed. "That's first-class, isn't it? By Jove!"

"Yes," she said, "it is. And they want some more. And I am going to write some—as many as I can—a whole lot!"

And so she did.

But she had crossed the delicate, impalpable dividing line. And after that, Life itself began, and memories of her lose the meaning which attaches itself to the memories of the Mind of a Child.

THE END.

AN OLD SONG.

[THE SONG OF SOLOMON, v. 2, 5.]

By H. C. Bunner.

Love, I have wandered a weary way,
A weary way for thee,
The East is wan with the smile of the day—
Open thy door to me!

My hair is wet with the dew of the night
That falls from the cedar-tree;
The shadows are dark; but the East is light—
Open thy door to me!

The stones of the road have bruised my feet—
The hours till morn are three—
Thou that hast spikenard precious sweet,
Open thy door to me!

Stay not thy hand upon the lock,
Nor thy fingers on the key.
In the breeze before morn the tree-tops rock—
Open thy door to me!

My love is the fairest, the only one,
The choice of her house is she—
The height of the heaven hath seen the sun—
Open thy door to me!

The holy kiss of my lips and thine
Shall the sun have grace to see?
The hours foregone of the night are nine—
Open thy door to me!

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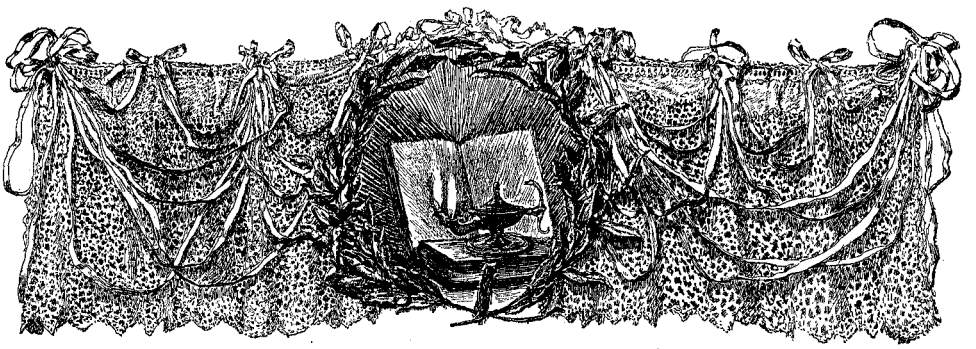

THE POINT OF VIEW

Most of the biographical sketches called out by the death of M. H. Taine note, as a fact of particular importance, that, during the period of his retirement in the Pyrenees to recover his health, his favorite study was Spenser's "Faerie Queene." In view of this, it is interesting to look back into his "History of English Literature," and see what this study of Spenser ended in.

Taine's "History of English Literature" has been criticised often because, setting out in an imposing equipage of theory, it was forced many times in its progress to come down and dance or chase about in the most primitive, intuitive, unscientific way. And at no point is the descent more emphatic, the abandonment of the trim, neat, but unfurthering theory more complete than in the passages relating to Spenser. Meeting M. Taine only there, one would never dream that one was dealing with a man who elsewhere seemed almost to hold himself ready to compound you a great poet by recipe. "Among all these poems," he begins by saying, "there is one truly divine, so divine that the *reasoners* of succeeding ages have found it wearisome, that even now but few understand it—Spenser's 'Faerie Queene.'"

The "reasoners" indeed, when M. Taine had set out to be a reasoner beyond all of them! And to the end of the chapter the tone is the same. For the cold, hard, practical facts about Spenser and his work, one better resort anywhere rather than hither. It is neither recital, analysis, nor exposition; but soaring, sweeping, unbreathing rhapsody. It is meet, however; the subject amply justifies it; and no one who had himself ever come under Spenser's spell could be otherwise than grateful for it. Moreover, it is illuminating; to a sympathetic reader far more so than pages upon pages more formally expository — such pages, for example, as make up the ponderous dissertation of the late Dean of St. Paul's on the "Faerie Queene," with its carefully numbered paragraphs and its conscientious enumeration of all the small technical crudenesses. But it would be very confusing, I fancy, to anyone who came to the study of Spenser without a strong native love of poetry in his heart, and in the rigidly scientific spirit which M. Taine professed to be himself making the study in. It would probably strike our later eminent Spencer, Mr. Herbert, for instance, as little better than nonsense.

The most significant fact in M. Taine's attitude toward Spenser is not, however, that for the moment his admiration rapped him away from his theories. It is, rather, that this philosopher who fell a-rhapsodizing over his subject was dealing with an English poet, and was himself a Frenchman. We know how hard it has been for Frenchmen to come into any sympathy with our poetry. They have almost denied that we had any, or were capable of producing any. We have kept the account about square, no doubt, by not being overready with our approval of theirs; but that we have done so only emphasizes the barrier which M. Taine had to surmount. "Tout ce qui se fait en Angleterre est, d'une façon générale," says M. Jules Lemaître, "exactment le *contraire* de ce qui se fait en France." And M. Lemaître him-

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self, forty years after M. Taine made his study of the "Faerie Queene" (and these forty years have greatly modified national prejudices), is not shy of letting us know that, to his mind at least, most "ce qui se fait en Angleterre" is, in consequence, rather ill done. Yet he is a critic who, by his own confession, "travaille continuellement à se maintenir l'esprit aussi libre que possible," and who succeeds fairly well in the laudable endeavor.

Not only did M. Taine surmount the barrier, but he chose for his particular regard the one among our great poets whom we ourselves have found it most difficult to be perfectly fond of. We accept Spenser for the "poet's poet," and ungrudgingly put him third or fourth, or, at lowest, fifth in our lists; but almost none of us has cared to live with him. Even Lowell shows fits of coolness toward him; and in Matthew Arnold the mentions of him are scant and, as I think, distinctly unadoring. The nearest the lover's attitude of any recent English writer's is perhaps that of Mr. Hamerton, who says that he "should like very well to be shut up in a garden for a whole summer with no literature but the 'Faerie Queene,'"—a desire which one year, we are glad to know, he "very nearly realized." But in M. Taine's admiration there are no reservations. From the first word to the last, his tribute contains not a single proviso. We are never warned to make allowances for the age, to study the case historically, or anything of that sort. Whatever may have been in his mind, his statements are absolute. Even in "The Shepheard's Calender" he hears no voice "but of thinkers and poets," though some native critics have thought they heard at least an undertone of the dull-witted Gabriel Harvey there. And this, in M. Taine, is very interesting. It is also very grateful.

THE cultivated young American girl of our time has, it may be assumed, even amid her triumphs, certain moments common to all mankind, in which she echoes the pathetic little wish of the poet Burns, and wonders exactly what impression she is producing upon the world around her. If so, she may now see herself very cleverly and, withal, very amiably reflected, without fear that any national prejudice or prepossession has softened the lines or heightened the tints to make the portrait a flattered one. The Florentine writer, Carlo Placci, has chosen for the heroine of his first novel, "Un Furto," an American, of established position in her own land, who makes her way with the smallest possible effort into that inner circle of Italian society from which foreigners of the floating population, and especially Anglo-Saxons, are, for the most part, excluded. Miss Daisy Roberts is a native of the "Far West," travelling in her mother's care; we are led to infer that she brings with her no letters other than letters of credit; but she is well educated and well bred, having made the best application of all the advantages that wealth can give; she has intelligence and refinement as well as personal charm; and, accordingly, the palace doors, one by one, are opened to her, until, at last, she is declared to have become the fashion.

Though she is a very modern young woman indeed, a warm friend of John Sargent and an admirer of Monet, her sympathy with the early Italian masters, whom, hitherto, she has known only from engravings or photographs, is keen and genuine. When her discernment is said by an acquaintance to be exceptional in one of her nation, she defends her compatriots loyally. "How should their taste be trained," she asks, "in streets named by numbers, where one house is precisely like another?" and then turns the tables in an amusing way, by calling her Italian friends to account for their own lack of interest in these priceless things. The dialogue throughout the book is exceptionally good, and all the conversations in which she takes part go with a sprightliness wherein the author's introductory promise of her interesting and many-sided personality is well sustained. He has taken care not to make her faultless. She is too eager for success, too ready to exchange one set of friends for another when the hour of its achievement comes. And, in matters of the heart, she is uncertain and capricious as an April day. But, whether picking flowers in the Certosa garden, posing for a photograph, or leading her lovers from ball-room to ball-room to accept one, at last, with ready ingenuity by a single

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stroke of the pen, she remains always a fascinating little figure whom it would be a delight to see and know.

The central interest of the book lies in the remorse of the delinquent whose curious theft supplies the title, and to that even the love adventures of Miss Daisy Roberts are subordinated. The details of her portrait have been left somewhat incomplete. But a good unfinished picture is always interesting. And this of her is so delicately handled, so free from exaggeration or caricature, so true in its fine points to life, that, for her sake alone, the new foreign author deserves his success and is heartily to be congratulated.

A RECENT writer, discoursing "On Growing Old," took what seems to be a needlessly disparaging view of that inevitable process. He quoted Cicero's deliverances on the subject, but quoted them chiefly to scoff at what he affected to regard as the Roman essayist's faint praise of an indefensible condition. Cicero was thankful to old age because it diminished his appetite for food and drink, and aggravated his eagerness for rational conversation; but this contemporary pessimist declared his belief that there was not an old man of his acquaintance who would not prefer roast fowl and champagne with the appetite and digestion of youth to the chance of conversing at length with the wisest person in the vicinity. Cicero considered emancipation from physical appetites and passions as the best gift of old age, and this critic admitted that advantage, and added to it the felicity of escaping from "a certain tyranny of the intellect" and the privilege of having "no final convictions." But with all its compensations conceded, the decline of life seemed to him a poor thing, and fit chiefly to bring one to a penitential realization that life is disappointment and vanity, and the mortal coil an integument chiefly blessed in the shuffling.

Now it was an amusing circumstance that this discourse should have come out in print sandwiched between some Reminiscences of Emerson, by Dr. Furness, of Philadelphia, and certain recollections of his College days by Dr. Edward Everett Hale. It appears from reference to Dr. Furness's article that his experience of life covers no fewer years than ninety-one. Dr. Hale's admissions make him out only a little over seventy, which is not old age to be sure, but constitutes a reasonable maturity. Yet it was impossible to detect in the papers of either of these reverend and experienced gentlemen —one venerable and the other mature—any hint or suggestion that so far as either of them has got, he finds any serious defect in life. This is not conclusive evidence, of course, but it is suggestive. It is particularly suggestive of one asset of old age which the essayist I have been talking about has omitted to specify. Everyone knows what the tontine system of life insurance is. A number of people pay equal sums of money into a pool; the amount is put out at interest and the surviving subscriber takes the accumulated sum. Similarly every man of letters gradually comes to be joint owner with other persons of a mass of valuable literary material which cannot be used by any of the joint owners so long as the others survive. But if he outlives the rest it all becomes his, and he can do what he will with it, without fear of hurting anyone's feelings or disclosing anything that would work injury to the living or to the memory of the dead. Who is there that writes and is still under fifty who will not admit that the stories he knows the best, and that are the best worth telling, are those that he cannot tell, because of the score of people still on earth who would strip the disguises from his characters and read as biography what he designed to have pass as fiction? Which of us does not think he might do a *magnum opus* if there were no lives in being to hinder!

And another great advantage of getting decently old is the acquisition of the privilege of loafing without compunctions. In these days, provided a man has fairly filled his granary during the heat and labor of his day of strength, old age is the time for him to travel, to own a farm, to collect books and china images, to read many novels and frivolous books, to have a yacht if his accumulations will stand it, and to work just so much as will increase his contentment, and no more. He ought to have income enough to play with, and life enough left to play. If he hasn't, it is not the fault of old age, but of himself; or pos-

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sibly it is his misfortune. Certainly old men abound who, having lived wisely and well, lack neither the means nor the disposition to find continued felicity in life. Anyone can recall a dozen such veterans at thought, and it would be easy to mention one or two whom everyone knows about, who in the ripeness of their intellectual and the haleness of their physical powers, seem to have more fun in a few minutes than many dull youths with good appetites have in a year.

THERE is a sentiment about the French people, held mainly by Englishmen and Americans under the shadow of English thought, which was tersely though somewhat crudely expressed by the man who became dissatisfied with the conduct of a French waiter in a restaurant and noted the ever-recurring solace he found in the belief that all Frenchmen when they died would go to hell. The author of "French Traits" has been at pains to make it clear that this conception of the destination of the French is probably erroneous, and is based on ignorance of French character. He boldly maintains that the French are not wicked in all the particulars in which they differ from the English, but in some are merely different. Especially, he points out, the Frenchman has the social instinct in a degree that the Anglo-Saxon can neither aspire to nor easily comprehend, and many details of conduct which we attribute to the defects in his character are really due to the exceptional development of his solidarity. Thus, if he is somewhat querulous and unduly prone to vociferation, that is not because he is really more quarrelsome than his Anglo-Saxon neighbor, but that, thanks to his dependence on his fellow, his wrath evaporates in language, whereas British individualism comes to blows. And if his moral sense, and even his moral conduct, digresses from the British ideal, that is due, if not directly to his solidarity, at least to the same causes that have made him the social creature that he is.

It is a great comfort to a humane mind of Anglo-Saxon perversions, to find out these peculiarities of the French, and learn to regard their future, whether in this world or the next, with hopefuller anticipations. So much relief comes to a benevolent intelligence from a comprehension of the reasons that exist for believing that a great contemporary people are not so wholly abandoned as they seem, that it naturally occurs to try the same prescription for the cure of what seem to be analogous cases. And in particular there are the Irish. Some of us Americans and many of our British cousins are worried about the Irish. We Americans especially are liable to forebodings that they are too quarrelsome, or too improvident, or too imperfectly veracious, or too something else to make up into American citizens of the proper standard. How immensely reassuring it would be to all of us who want to hold the best opinion that is tenable of our fellow-countrymen, if some one, taking a leaf out of "French Traits," would take the pains to demonstrate that the Irish have got solidarity, too, and that there is nothing really the matter with them, but only something different. To say that the French are all going to the bow-wows, and the Irish are in some respects very like them, is one thing. But to say that the French have the eminently precious and respectable quality called solidarity in a condition of exalted development, and the Irish have it also, is quite a different sentiment. As fast as we learn to feel like that about it we are filled with an increasing eagerness to take the Celt to our bosoms, and enjoy the benefits of solidarity at his expense.

If the Irishman had not some qualities that were exceptionally worth investigation, we Americans would not have him so much on our minds. His political importance in this country would not be so disproportionate to his numbers and his wealth, unless there were some points in which he had the advantage of the rest of the population. Is it not really his solidarity, nursed and developed by the same Catholic Church that has helped the same development in France, that enables him to carry the ward, and prove himself

> The very pulse of the machine,

while his Yankee brother, wrapt in his individualism, looks on somewhat jealously, and wonders how it is done!

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